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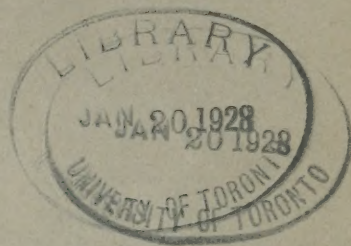




# THE INFLUENCE OF HIGHWAY TRANSPORT UPON THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF MY COMMUNITY

by

Dorothy Louise Roberts and others.



**PRIZE WINNING ESSAYS**  
IN THE COMPETITION FOR THE  
**HARVEY S. FIRESTONE UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP**  
FOR 1923







# THE INFLUENCE OF HIGHWAY TRANSPORT UPON THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF MY COMMUNITY

THE NATIONAL PRIZE WINNING  
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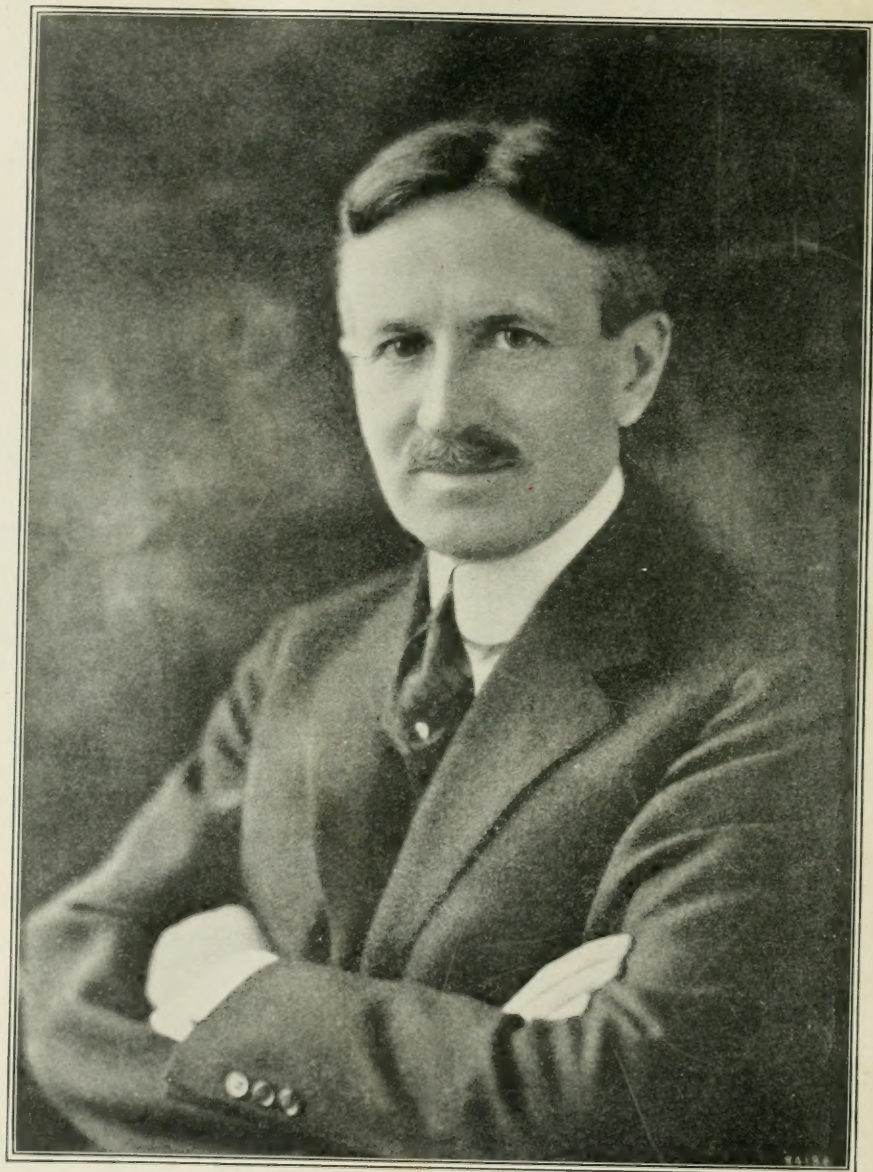
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MR. HARVEY S. FIRESTONE

Founder and Donor of the Harvey S. Firestone University Scholarship  
Awarded Annually in the National Good Roads Essay Contest

## INTRODUCTION

**T**HE following pages contain the essay which won the Harvey S. Firestone University Scholarship and the essays adjudged the best from each State and Territory in the National Good Roads Essay Contest for 1923.

The subject of these essays is "The Influence of Highway Transportation Upon the Religious Life of My Community." Approximately 200,000 essays were written and submitted by the High School students of the United States and its Territorial Possessions.

The subject of the contest for 1923 created such widespread interest among the clergy and church organizations that this booklet was issued to meet the demand for copies of the essays.

The Harvey S. Firestone University Scholarship was founded in 1920 by Harvey S. Firestone, of Akron, Ohio, with the object of stimulating thought and study among the young men and women of America in highways and highway transportation. It provides all tuition and expenses for a four-year course in any college or university chosen by the recipient.

The Scholarship is awarded each year to the student of High School grade who writes the best essay on a subject related to highways and highway transportation. Mr. Firestone believes that good roads have a direct bearing upon our spiritual welfare as well as our economic progress. They not only mean greater material wealth but contribute largely to our moral, religious and educational advancement.

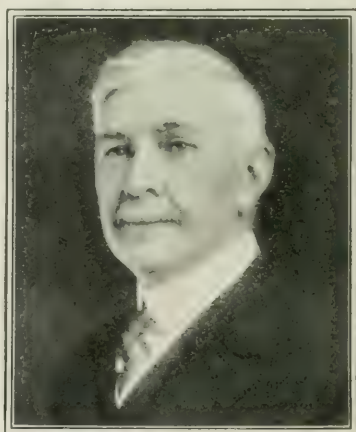
The contest is conducted each year under the auspices of the Highway Education Board of Washington, D. C., which is composed of the following members: Dr. John J. Tigert, U. S. Commissioner of Education, Chairman; Thomas H. MacDonald, Chief, Bureau of Public Roads, Department of Agriculture; Lieut. Col. Henry C. Jewett, Engineers Corps, U. S. A., War Department; Roy D. Chapin, Automotive Industry; Dean F. L. Bishop, Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education; Harvey S. Firestone, Rubber Industry; B. B. Bachman, Society of Automotive Engineers.



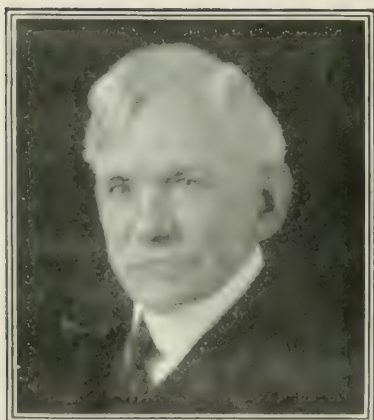
NATIONAL BOARD OF JUDGES  
In the National Good Roads Essay Contest for 1923



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*Educator and Publicist*  
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*Church*



Miss Dorothy Louise Roberts who wrote the best essay on the subject of "The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community", in the contest for the Harvey S. Firestone University Scholarship for 1923, while a senior student in High School at Harlan, Kentucky. She is the daughter of Rev. Thomas B. Roberts, now pastor of the First M. E. Church at Marietta, Ohio. She is attending Marietta College.

Her winning essay follows on the next page.

# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Dorothy Louise Roberts  
Harlan, Kentucky*

THE Appian Way, most famous of Roman highways, was called by Horace Bushnell "the Queen of Roads." In establishing Christianity Paul and other early Christians made great use of the twenty-nine famous military roads radiating from Rome. "And so we came to Rome. And . . . the brethren . . . came to meet us as far as The Market of Appius." And it came to pass that Rome, having the greatest road, built later the greatest church, St. Peter's. The greatest church of Christianity built at the end of the greatest highway. Strange coincidence! Here is food for thought. From the very first, the mightiest of all religions went forward upon the great highways of travel.

The present writer lives in the mountains of Southeastern Kentucky where the religious life is backward, and the roads almost impassable. The purpose of this paper is to show how these two facts affect each other. One dislikes to write anything uncomplimentary of one's own community, but one should study conditions before suggesting remedies.

A survey of Harlan County shows forty-seven churches with thirty-six ordained and licensed preachers. Excepting four churches in the county seat, these are weak, struggling organizations, located principally in mining camps, served by untrained preachers. These men, most of whom could with difficulty pass the entrance examinations of a first-class high school, work at the mines or elsewhere throughout the week, having little leisure for study or preparation. Such leadership develops only religion of the emotional, irresponsible type.

Statistics from our criminal courts indicate that these outlying churches fail to meet the situation. Recently within four days in this locality twelve persons met violent deaths.

General lawlessness is not in reality the cause of crime. It is only the outward symptom. It suggests ignorance; the people do not know. With sapped vitality and weak morals go sluggish minds. Large families live in poor, small houses; the death rate is high. In one school a hook-worm clinic showed ninety-nine per cent of the pupils were afflicted. Religion should not be blind to physical facts. Effective churches would make such unwholesome facts impossible. Disease, crime, irreligion, these exist where people do not know what is good in character or right in conduct.

If it be true that ignorance explains the backwardness of this territory, then both the church and school are needed to counteract it. Religious and educational effort here rise and fall together. Good churches foster good schools. Vigorous churches and centralized schools are impossible in rural sections without good roads. Our isolation is the cause of our ignorance. We would



have somewhere to go and something to get, if we had some way of going. Three dollars to ride five miles in a Harlan jitney! The average car is a hopeless wreck after one year of steady bumping over ridges and washouts. *My kingdom for a highway!*

Among our agricultural folk old farming methods prevail. The mountaineer wrests a few hundred dollars where he should get a thousand. The jitney, auto truck, and family car will be chariots from heaven, solving our isolation. Good roads will encourage the auto truck, diversity of crops, improved farming methods, cooperative selling, contentment, and an increase of the economic surplus. This surplus we will invest in churches and schools. Good roads will mean fewer churches, but better, larger ones; fewer ministers, but better trained, educated community leaders.

So Harlan County must build her Appian Ways, that modern Apostles may have highways for the new program of evangelism and education. "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; . . . it shall be for the redeemed." Out of such material things as stone and cement must we build through our mountains the highways leading to the goal of our spiritual desires,—religious education for all.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Dorothy Hodges  
Madison, Alabama*

**I**NASMUCH as time and study are being given to the influence of highway transportation upon religion, it might be asked, "What is true religion, and what does it include?" I would answer that true religion involves two duties: First, duty to God; second, duty to man. To do either his duty to God or to man, man must be converted to Christ, and, unless he hears the Word of God preached, he is not likely to be converted. How is he to hear it? By going to church. In rural communities, how will he get there? Over good roads.

In my community, where the church is patronized largely by country people, highway transportation plays a large part in helping the people do their duty to God, which includes attending Sunday school and church regularly, in order that they may learn to appreciate more fully His wonderful works. Much spiritual benefit is received from the Chautauqua, which is held annually ten miles from here. With good roads and cars the people of my community get the full benefit of it.

As binding as the duty to God is the duty to man. Do not the majority of the commandments show this? What a large part transportation plays here! It brings inspiration to us and carries us where our lives will touch and benefit others. A declamatory contest was held thirty miles from our village. The

roads were good and a number of students from this school were able to go. The subject of one of the declamations was "Immortality." A boy who went from here was affected more by that declamation than by any sermon he had ever heard. A college president came last Sunday and delivered a wonderful message to the people of my community. Several of our boys received a wonderful inspiration when they went to an Older Boys' Conference last month. If it had not been for our improved methods of transportation, they could not have gone, and, perhaps, would never have received such an inspiration. As a result of this, a Hi-Y Club was organized and, on account of the good roads, a leader from a town ten miles away comes down and holds the weekly meetings.

If the democratic standards of Christ are to endure, we must see that the common interests of our people are fostered. Perhaps the greatest agent in finding and establishing this common ground is the public school. Here transportation is an important factor. Without the use of trucks to convey the people to and from school, it is impossible to bring the children of rural communities together in large enough numbers to maintain a high school. Good roads are a prerequisite for their use.

Outside of the purely religious services of the church, it is beneficial to man to gather in community meetings. The most civilizing influence in the world is the contact of man with man. Transportation serves as a link connecting country communities with this civilizing and Christianizing influence, without which there is the isolation of the country and the primitive standards of the barbarians.

Then I would say that highway transport carries the Gospel to man; shows him his duty to God and his fellow creature; brings him into groups where he may discharge these duties; brings messages to inspire him to higher endeavor, and trains his mind to understand more fully God's wonderful works.

Verily I say unto you, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Ben Thompson  
Peoria, Arizona*

**R**ELIGION is best fostered through association. Association is made possible only by adequate means of communication. Improved highway transport is the greatest means of communication available.

The paramount aim of the church is the improvement of mankind. There must be perfect cooperation to realize this ideal. Poor highways mean isolation of churches.

Our community, until recently, has been served by poor roads. This caused "over churching" in the rural districts. These numerous churches were characterized by their small membership and still smaller attendance. As a rule churches with less than one hundred members decline. The churches of this community were no exception; they were in process of slow decay. Over one-half the total number had no resident minister while others paid such small salaries that a competent pastor was not available. These isolated, poorly equipped, and under-ministered churches bred sectarianism and petty dogmatism. They were smothered in their own struggle for existence. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." Faulty communication meant the continuance of a decrepit religious organization. The whole aim of the church was thwarted by isolation, resulting from poor highway transport.

With the advent of the motor car, ushering in improved highways, large areas were made accessible to larger churches. The old conditions disappeared. Instead of four or five small decadent churches there grew up one centralized church, self supporting, and adequately ministered: on the whole, a big asset to its community. The number of flourishing churches, sprung from our improved highways, has been of inestimable importance in stamping out disease, cleaning up the cities and towns, and improving the educational conditions of the community. "United we stand." This partial consolidation of the churches is a great stride forward toward more perfect cooperation. Without highways people could not associate and exchange ideas. Obviously, the movement is wholly indebted to improved highway transport.

Personal contact with his parishioners is of vast importance to the success of the pastor. This was very difficult with our old system of dilapidated roads. With good highways he is enabled to visit all parts of the community and become intimately acquainted with all his people.

Church attendance is but slightly affected by disagreeable weather; whereas, with our old roads, services oftentimes were suspended for weeks. With improved highways and auto traffic the aged and infirm are now enabled to attend all religious services. Many church workers, with a few minutes extra driving, bring their less fortunate friends, who could not otherwise come. Often in the past I have seen our church with only a half dozen horses and buggies hitched close by. Truly it was a beautiful monument to the faithful Christians who would not be daunted by the fatigue of the hot, dusty road. Today, as I go to church, I see cars parked along both sides of the street. Each car has brought several people to worship. The old was a monument to the faithful but the new is a lasting emblem of the help that religion is receiving from improved highway transport.

The introduction of modern highway transport has strengthened community spirit. The church, the strength of the community, and yet dependent upon it is vitally affected by civic and community life. A greater community spirit means a greater church.



The spirit of cooperation in every branch of church work has been greatly aided by conventions. In these conventions people of all denominations, from every part of the community gather and discuss their problems and solutions. As a result, a new understanding or spirit of fellowship is springing up among the different denominations. The movement bids fair to destroy the walls of denominationalism, long detrimental to cooperation in religious work. With poor roads and the sluggish horse and buggy these conventions were practically useless. Only a few members from each district were able to make their way, perhaps by rail. Today, by our good highways and motor transport, thousands of people are enabled to attend these conventions.

Democracy was born of the spirit of religious freedom. It was nourished by association. Without religion democracy could not now exist. The great hope for the future of this nation is the promoting of high religious and democratic ideals through association. This aim will be best accomplished by improved highway transport.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Grace Benton  
Arkadelphia, Arkansas*

**I**N THE year 1833 young Willis S. Smith left Egypt, Illinois, for Okolona, Arkansas. He traveled on horseback the long stretch of crude highway that lay between the two villages. At Okolona he organized the first Sunday school in Clark County. He planted a religious ideal in log cabins at the end of ox-cart roads as well as in aristocratic homes along the Southern Military and the Okolona-Camden roads.

After sixteen years' residence at Okolona this religious leader moved to a new homestead plantation near the present site of my community. Why did he choose this location? It was not because he thought it a desirable place to exercise his ability of Christian leadership, for there were very few settlers in southern Clark County. A glance at the pre-Civil War map of Arkansas is a sufficient explanation. The Smith homestead was selected because of its admirable situation on the highway that connected Clark County with a boat landing on the Ouachita River. With a good outlet to market the planter soon became prosperous. He induced desirable families to homestead near him. After a while this little group of neighbors—their homesteads were separated by distances varying from one to six miles—decided to build a log cabin which would serve the double purpose of school and "meetin' " house.

The log cabin has long since disappeared. The ideals that prompted its construction now manifest themselves in a modern schoolhouse and two spacious church buildings. But are these buildings serving my community as the founders of the original church would have them serve?

They play an important part in the community life in the summer; it is then that "the roads get good" and the protracted "meetins" are conducted. For a time a spirit of helpfulness pervades the neighborhood. The worn farmers, hardened laborers, and depressed merchants seem to grasp the idea of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man; the Sunday schools and other religious organizations take on new life; individuals grow happy in their religious activities. At such a time in the life of my community it seems improbable that the monotonous days of the past winter and spring can ever be repeated.

But in a few months the winter rains begin. The roads, no more than dirt beds, become almost impassable, the bad mud-holes permitting only such traffic as can be done on horseback or on foot. Needless to say, the attendance at Sunday school and church rapidly decreases. Two or three successive "preaching days" find the pulpits unoccupied by their circuit-rider pastors. Before the spring rains are over the community falls once more into its deep old rut of social and religious isolation. Not only a host of back-sliders but the few faithful Sunday school teachers and pupils find themselves in great need of a religious revival. And so the date is fixed for another protracted "meetin." Thus, from year to year, the spiritual life of my community repeats its course.

Existence here offers little that satisfies the spiritual cravings of the young or of the old. The ambitious youths who might become religious leaders are fired with a determination to get away as soon as possible. Many of the older religious leaders have left, or are leaving in search of better opportunities for themselves and families. Their homes may be seen vacant or occupied by families that contribute little or nothing to spiritual development.

Lately, the churches of my community have been declared not strong enough to maintain their pastors. What has become of their strength? It is buried in the mud-holes and miry ruts called roads, with no hope of resurrection as long as the road over-seer affirms that he "ain't got time to see to havin' them roads worked 'til crops are off hand."

Until a road-improvement policy is advocated and developed, the social and religious conditions cannot be bettered. May the time soon come when our roads as arteries that nourish and sustain the religious life of the country will properly perform their mission.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Buchner Porter*  
*Riverside, California*

**N**OT many years ago, Riverside was a small, unpretentious village with a few farms and fewer homes scattered throughout the fertile valley

that was bounded by a slow winding river and a low range of hills. It was the typical Western town of the nineteenth century. There was no church, only two or three narrow, dusty streets that led past the ancient, weatherbeaten stores where the rougher element passed their time. Once a reform movement was undertaken by the more educated and religious citizens but it ended without accomplishing anything.

However, as the years went by, the majority of the inhabitants came to realize that the rest of the country was advancing both spiritually and materially while their own community was sinking deeper and deeper into the rut of ignorance. Aroused, they saw the necessity of awakening a desire for better things, and they did it in a most novel manner.

They persuaded those who lived in the surrounding country and who had been going to church in other nearby localities to which there were better roads to come to Riverside on condition that new roads and churches should be constructed there. Thus through the efforts of the better citizens a large number of roads were built. The bicycle and the automobile were beginning to take the place of the horse and wagon, and it was necessary to provide a way by which the parents and children could get to Sunday school and church on time. A bus line was introduced which went over a regular route each Sunday morning, gathering the people for miles around. It not only enabled one to live where he chose without owning his own machine, but it also aided the various pastors in visiting members of their congregations who were sick or who lived some distance from town.

Later, when the town had become a city of some size, this same group of patriotic citizens appropriated a sum of money for the erection of an imposing cross on the summit of Mt. Rubidoux, a hill overlooking Riverside. This was a suitable memorial to Father Junipero Sierra, a missionary who had crossed over this hill many years before.

Now each Easter morning, at dawn, a beautiful Christian service is held here. This is largely due to the excellent means of transportation. Thousands of people belonging to every walk in life make their pilgrimage to this mountain top and bow their heads in solemn reverence as they stand silent in the open air listening to the Word of God. The following facts show in a brief way to what extent Riverside has developed, chiefly because of the influence of transportation on its religious life:

First, the area of the city is forty square miles, but its thirty-five churches are within the short radius of one square mile. It is evident that Riverside must have a remarkable transportation system in order to fill these churches each Sunday with a congregation that is collected from the people living within this large area.

Second, these good roads are a benefit to the religious activities of the whole county because it enables representatives to reach localities that are remote



or difficult of access, and makes possible the holding of conventions and institutes by strong teams who could not otherwise reach them. This is more readily appreciated when we know that Riverside County extends over two hundred miles to the banks of the Colorado River.

It is generally conceded that Riverside as a community is more religious than any other city of its size in this section of the state. Country life is conducive to strong character building and the good roads have brought the surrounding country under the influence of religion. No community is better than the moral tone of its citizenship. Although California has no Sunday law, Riverside ranks higher than the average city morally, materially and spiritually. This is largely due to the prosperity of the churches made easy of access by the system of transportation maintained by public taxation.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Dixie Cobb  
Denver, Colorado*

**S** AID the Country Mouse to the Church Mouse as they met on the church lawn one fall evening. "What has changed in South Denver that causes folks from out my way to come in so often? Why, I can recollect when they'd be satisfied to come once in two or three weeks, but now if they don't come at least once and often three or four times a week they think it a terrible calamity."

The little Church Mouse burst into laughter at his friend's ignorance. "Didn't you notice the fine graded roads and the luxurious cars as you came in on that truck with the cornstalks and pumpkins to decorate the gym for the party?"

"Good roads! Fine cars!" cried the Country Mouse in bewilderment. "I don't see where they have one thing to do with religion!"

"Te he," tittered the Church Mouse in great glee. "You just listen and you'll comprehend. You've heard Bobby Redbreast and Billy Bluejay tell how gorgeous it is up in the mountains and how everyone seems to feel our Creator's presence when He is in them. Religious educators, realizing this, are conducting camps up there to train young people to become better leaders. They come back over the good roads to the home church, eager to carry out the progressive plans they've learned about. I sat under the front pew last Sunday night and watched the Geneva Glen girls put on a pantomime that they had worked out unassisted. My! it was marvelous!" His eyes twinkled in approval at the memory of the production.

"Still I don't see that good roads have anything to do with Washington

Park Community Church," repeated the Country Mouse with a contemptuous flip of his tail.

"Why, it would be impossible to reach these camps in the depths of the mountains without good roads and automobiles."

"Do they always put on programs such as you spoke of?" squeaked the Country Mouse, wiggling his whiskers in disgust, for he thought church programs would be dreadfully tiresome.

"Goodness! No! Some of our leaders supervise the children's play in the gymnasium every evening. Others plan classes for the young people's recreation. Up in the parlors there are parties or class meetings nearly every evening. There are so many banquets and dinners. It is truly amazing how fat I've grown since this community church was formed. When Grandfather Whiskers was young he used to hoard crumbs from the yearly Donation Supper to keep his children from starvation. The rest of the year he had to depend on the babies' Sunday cracker crumbs for daily bread." The Church Mouse cast an approving eye over his own sleek gray coat and continued musingly, "And to think Grandfather Whiskers was once the talk of the town. Everybody said, 'As poor as a Church Mouse.'"

"You may be right, but I think Washington Park Community Church is terribly selfish to keep all these trained people to itself," squeaked the Country Mouse unwilling to let the Church Mouse have complete victory.

"It doesn't. They have Gospel teams that go many miles to conduct church services in small congregations. Last Sunday morning when I was hiding in the choir loft, I observed one of the girls writing. How anyone could write while Dr. Nuckells was delivering such a burning address was beyond my comprehension. At the close of the service I heard her say, 'Wasn't that a fine sermon? I've taken it down to use when I go with the Gospel teams.' Then, too, our leaders go to other Sunday schools over the good roads and assist them in more interesting programs. The fact that Washington Park is a real community church is possible because of good roads."

Just then a look of terror sprang into the eyes of the Church Mouse, but he said with dignity, "Come quickly with me, for there is Puss, and I am taking the best road to safety!" The little Country Mouse did not hesitate to discuss the quality of the road. His heart leaped with gladness because there was a good road over which he could frisk to safety.

# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Viola H. Greene  
Columbia, Connecticut*

THE only church in my community is the little hamlet church characteristic of New England. As there is only one it sinks denominationalism and stands forth as a religious and social center for all sects. Around it is a small cluster of homes, and leading out from it a network of roads extends to the farm districts. These resemble the majority of Connecticut's country highways. At certain seasons they are nearly impassable because of mud, at others they furnish long delightful country drives. They have fallen into disuse, however, for only a small proportion of the rural population attends the church. It derives its main support from the surrounding hamlet. In these limits the church is the center of all social activity and has a very strong moral influence on the people.

Our church problem, therefore, seems to be in the rural districts and there are two phases of it. The first of these concerns the drifting away of the younger members and potential members. The second concerns the influx of immigrants from Southern Europe. Have the roads anything to do with this problem? Yes, they created the first phase and solved the second.

The increase of automobiles has led to improvements of the highways which connect our farms with the cities. These were made from the economic viewpoint but incidentally they widened the social life of the farmer. The city provides more attractive amusements than our little hamlet can and the country church no longer influences the farmers socially. As that is the strongest tie that holds the young people, we began to look to the city for our religious life. The churches there are more beautiful; it is possible to obtain fine music and good preachers. The roads, built to connect our farms with their markets, have given us these superior advantages in religion and society also.

These highways are also an important factor in the second phase. The immigrants who are filling our farms are Hebrews and Roman Catholics. Our Protestant church cannot influence them. If it were not for our arteries these people would have no connection with churches of their own denomination. This situation would not only be a great injustice to them but also would result in the lowering of the moral standard of our community, for they represent a majority of the population.

Good roads have practically solved our religious problem. Our rural population has been drawn away from the little hamlet church but they have been taken in by larger and better churches. They have brought religion to our immigrant neighbors who would never have had it under the old system. In short, former interests centered in the hamlet and all roads led to it; at present our interests are in the city and our roads have connected us with it.



# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By F. Fairlee Habbart  
Wilmington, Delaware*

**S**PRING is here. The trees are in bud. Pretty robins greet us as we pass through the parks. Flowers again delight us with their fragrance and brilliant colors. It is the annual rebirth of the world. Should we not, each one, be especially thankful at this time to God who has given us the beauty of spring? As our very souls expand to take in the beauty of nature, should they not reach up a little farther to the Divine? Should not every church be filled with worshippers?

What effect has "Highway Transport" upon the religious life of my community? Do the splendid highways and automobiles add or detract from the influence of the church?

I am sorry to say that these luxuries lessen the good a church may do in some localities. From every pretty town on this peninsula public highways stretch out, alluring the fortunate possessor of an automobile. The working man says that Sunday is the only day he has to enjoy his automobile. He does not go to church, but starts out early Sunday morning for an all-day trip. The church misses his presence. His share in the religious influence that the church spreads in the community is not done. Some one else follows his example. If you visit a medium sized town any Sunday this spring or summer you will find the average church having a small congregation, and consequently the influence that the church spreads in the community is small. The outstanding reason for this condition is "Highway Transport."

I am glad to say that this is not the case with my church. I belong to a city church which is built on the top of a hill. It can be compared with the house that was built on a rock. Time passed, the storms came, but the house remained. Thus our church has stood for thirty years. Slowly foreigners kept moving farther and farther up the hill. The people who built and had maintained the church moved to the outskirts of the city or to the suburbs. The new-comers have not come and worked to make the church an influence for good in the community. Yet our church is a strong influence which is keenly felt in the neighborhood.

How are we able to keep this city church full of life, radiating good in its locality, if the supporters have moved away? The answer is not hard to find. From this church, extending in every direction, are good city streets which join the state highways. Thus it is easy for our church members, who possess automobiles, to attend the church services, not only on Sunday but also through the week.

About a year ago a very important meeting was held in the church. A passerby that evening would have seen a long line of cars. If he were a thought-

ful person he could not help but ask himself why so many automobiles were standing outside the church on that spring evening. The meeting ended. The men got in their cars and rode home. The passerby might never guess the value to the community of the presence of those men.

If he were to pass by tonight he would see that the church building has been extended. The windows in the lower part will be lighted. If he stops for a second, he will hear shouts and clamor from within. He may meet a chance acquaintance, who will tell him that the new building is a gymnasium where every night in the week boys and girls, men and women, come for wholesome recreation. The good from that meeting a year ago can not be estimated.

During the World War we had gasoline-less Sundays. There were no machines in front of the church and many pews were vacant. When I consider that without the automobiles and state highways our church and its work would suffer as it did on those gasoline-less Sundays, I realize what an aid "Highway Transport" is in the religious life of this community.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Cortez Wilson Peters  
Washington, D. C.*

**I**F ONE were to visit a certain Baptist church in the little village of West Hyattsville, Maryland, one would clearly see that that church is not only a credit to the neighborhood, but a model to show to the Nation the effect of highway transport on the religious life of that community.

Two years ago in that village the idea of attending the church for night services seemed ridiculous. This opinion was partly justified because of the deplorable condition of the roads. The surface of them was as rough as the waves on the ocean. In fact, very few buggies or wagons could be drawn a mile over them without showing the extreme need of spending a few hours in a nearby repair shop. Because of that fact, repair shops were as regular along those roads as are the figures on the dial of a clock. When it rained, transportation was out of the question, as far as going to the church was concerned. As a result of the conditions of the roads, there was an unwritten law in the church I attended which was as follows, "SERVICES HELD REGULARLY, AS PER SCHEDULE, UNLESS IT RAINS." That was one law that did not have to be enforced, for even if the members did decide to run the risk of getting to the church safe and sound, their horses would act in such a manner that one-half of them would lose their highly valued religion before going one hundred yards. Except for the Sunday morning services, the religious life of my community was dead and had been buried. There were a few faithful members, however, who attended quite a number of the services, and their faithfulness was attributed to the fact that they lived not more than ten

or twenty yards from the church. It was a common occasion for the edifice to be partly filled with members and then the head deacon would have to conduct the services because of the failure of the pastor to arrive. In spite of all this, when the services were held, they were as good as any in that neighborhood, and as good as might have been expected.

Whether or not a miracle happened, I cannot say. But, I can say that sufficient appropriations were made by the state of Maryland to improve the roads to such an extent that one could travel even on wooden-wheeled roller skates. It was then no longer considered a drudge to go to the church, but a pleasure, and every person who stayed at home on a Sunday night, whether it rained or not, was considered trifling.

Cooperation between neighboring churches became more evident. Friendly competition started between them. There were several prizes, of five dollars each, offered to the persons who could write the best literary description of some character in the Bible. Sunday school picnics and entertainments were given nearly every month during the summer. Every revival held was a tremendous success and the large attendance marked a record in the history of the church. Within a year after the improvement of the roads, the church grew to such an extent that out-of-door services had to be held. Social service work was initiated. Various circles, societies and clubs were organized. Among the leading societies that were organized by the ladies of the church was the sewing circle. They met two evenings in each week to help make clothes for the poor and the needy. By such deeds those who needed help were comforted and made happy, and those who were happy took great pleasure in trying to make others happy who were not as fortunate as they.

For anyone to have seen that church two years ago and see it at the present day, its progress would appear to be something of a phenomenon. In fact, it is difficult to conceive anything which has had as great an effect upon the religious life in my community as did highway transport.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Addie M. Muller  
Sanford, Florida*

**I**N MY home community in northwestern Oklahoma, the region once called No Man's Land, the development of good roads and of all religious activity have been inseparably connected, ever since the first dusty covered wagon stopped beside some creek.

The religious life of a community is a broad term; it includes more than church attendance and prayer meetings. It covers every spiritual phase of living, and all intercourse that lifts to a higher plane. During the last few



years immense changes in modes of living have taken place, changes directly traceable to the more general construction of good roads.

Only those who have lived in No Man's Land can even faintly realize what heartaches and struggles its settlement has meant. Many a homesick woman has thought wistfully of some little white church "back East;" its peacefulness, and the friendly faces of those who were brothers and sisters in that church. Many a strong man, without quite defining his need, wanted the inspiration of forceful sermons and solemnly swelling music. But it takes money to build churches, and a fair number of members to support them, and the settlers were generally poor, and long distances apart. When roads were only dusty trails, broken by canyons and sandhills, friendly callers were few.

As more settlers came, roads were improved somewhat, the very worst crossings in the creeks were fixed, and the deepest sand strawed. Sunday school, and occasionally church, was held in the first one-room schoolhouse, and no one who has not experienced a dearth of religious influences, can estimate the real value of Sunday school there. Men and women drove weary miles over the toilsome roads, to feel anew the "peace that passeth understanding," and old, old miracles were translated into the marvels of their daily surroundings for the little children.

Still the relentless miles were a barrier. A home missionary, dauntlessly during heat or cold, driving a team of Indian ponies, might meet many warm welcomes in the isolated settler's home, and yet encounter refusals to attend church services, because they were too far off, and the roads were bad; or because, in the rush of farm work, horses worked all week must rest on Sundays. The work of better organized churches, in the few small towns, had little influence outside the immediate limits of the towns. The roads were still a hindrance; the roads, and lack of any means of speedy transportation. A ten mile trip then was, to many, the equal of one of fifty, today. In summer the long sandhills and slippery clay slopes, and in winter ice-covered streams, drifted roads, or frozen slush kept people at home. Motor vehicles were rare, for their value was unproved, and the condition of the roads discouraged their use. Newspapers stimulated interest, however, and curiosity did its share. With the arrival of automobiles, good roads became a necessity, and a lasting change took place, resulting in good straight roads, passable in all seasons. It took perseverance and hard work, but men who dared No Man's Land were never quitters.

Because they forced the improvement of roads, automobiles helped in many ways. It is hard to believe, even when one has witnessed the change, how much they have increased religious activity. All life was broadened; young peoples' societies furnished experience and developed thought along many lines, encouraging comradeship and helpfulness. Sunday school and church came to mean more, when distance was no longer an obstacle. With better communication it was easier to practice the deeper principles of Christianity, love and kindness.

If some home missionary of the early days, absent fifteen or twenty years, should come back now, driving his wiry little ponies, he would see that many of his prayers for No Man's Land have been answered, and he could well say with Odell Sheppard:

"There are roads that clamber to greet the dawn,  
or dip to the misty sea,  
Wandering restlessly on and on  
Through all the years that be;  
But these that march across the plain,  
Past banners of goldenrod,  
Out of the sights and sounds of men,  
Are leading back to God."

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Elizabeth Davis  
Dublin, Georgia*

THE powers and usefulness of any church are measured by its accessibility to the greatest number of people. Hence, it is impossible to over-estimate the value and influence of good roads to the growth and expansion of the religious life of a community.

Primarily, the effect of good highway transportation makes it possible for the influence of the church to reach the dark and isolated sections where ignorance and superstition flourish.

Such was the condition of this community a few years ago. To the neighboring country it was known as Owl Hollow,—a place shunned on account of impassable roads. Its people, however, were religious by instinct and scrupulously honest. Owl Hollow had its meeting place which was referred to in conversation as "The Church." This was a small unceiled building constructed of rough pine boards. It had six windows with wooden shutters. Men and women entered through separate doors, and remained separated like the proverbial "Sheep and Goats." The house was furnished with rude pine benches, and, as it had been used for both school and church, there was an elevated platform across the rear which served as rostrum, stage and pulpit. The lighting system consisted of two oil lamps, with smoky chimneys and glaring tin-reflectors, one on either side blinking dreamily at each other across the intervening space. Since the broken stove emitted more smoke than heat, children were never carried there during cold weather after little Evelyn Phillips "tuck numonie and died."

This was also the news center of the neighborhood. After each service the

women exchanged gossip while the men smoked and argued at length as to the best time of the moon in which to plant their crop.

In the course of time a civil engineer passed, surveying for the construction of a new road. The following Sunday many farmers were heard to complain at the stakes the engineer had caused to be set up. Some said it was a useless expense, and could only benefit "the idle, no'count tourist goin' to Fluridy." Others contended that all their live stock would be "killed off" by the passing automobiles, and threatened to "go to law" and enjoin the Highway Department from inflicting upon them such injury. But one of the leading citizens who always stood for progress, said he would show his appreciation of this promised improvement by giving a right-of-way through his best upper field to make the road straight, and would furnish teams, without charge, to haul sand and gravel to make the road the best possible.

Ere long the highway was completed. People of the surrounding country began passing this way, and many of them visited the little church. In this manner they learned the spiritual needs of the community and set about to improve conditions. This friendly interest resulted in a religious revival such as our people had never experienced before. They began to take an intelligent and active part in all religious exercises. Everybody who could possibly get to church attended every service.

People spiritually awakened, naturally take pride in their house of worship. So these began to wonder why they had never noticed their need along this line before. Soon a meeting was called to consider the building of a new structure. It was there decided to build the best church they could afford. Each member pledged half his income for two years in order that a house in keeping with his religious interest might be erected.

Now a beautiful brick and stone structure, with every modern convenience, stands where the little rough building once stood. A lighting system takes the place of the oil lamps, steam heat supplants the broken stove, and stained glass has replaced the wooden shutters.

This neighborhood is now acknowledged as one of the leading religious communities of the state. Its influence extends to far-off Africa and China,—all this having been brought about by the building of a good highway. What good highway transportation has done for Owl Hollow, it has done for many communities, and can do for many more.



# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Orme E. Cheatham  
Honolulu, Oahu, Hawaii*

HIGHWAY transport and the cause of religion are inseparable. When in the year 1820 the first missionaries arrived in the Hawaiian Islands they found the greatest drawback to the introduction of the Christian religion to the native Hawaiians to be the inadequate means of transportation. Divinely guided, as they believed, the missionaries came from New England and here they found the Hawaiians, having cast their impotent idols into the taro patches, eagerly watching and waiting for some new form of worship.

There were few horses in the islands at that time, and no vehicles, so the only means of transport were by way of footpaths and mountain trails. Rain-fall being plentiful the greater part of the year, it will readily be seen that the difficulties in the way of the missionaries were many, and their continual prayer was for better facilities in reaching the people in outlying districts. Gradually the need was met until today our excellent highways reach the remotest sections, making religious worship possible to all who are devoutly inclined.

It was the prophet, Isaiah, who cried, "Go through, go through the gates; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people." And this cry has been echoed by all classes of religious workers bearing a message to our shores, until the coral has been gathered and the lava (pohaku-o-Pele) has been smoothed, permitting the construction of miles of macadamized road, which wind and twist in and out of the sunshine and shade of our beautiful forests and level plains.

Churches and all other religious and educational institutions in the Hawaiian Islands are now easily accessible to the public because of macadamized roads, which are kept in good repair and continually augmented. Good roads lead to good places in Hawaii, the church, the home, and the school, and they also lead to Nature's restful places by seashore and mountain, where the weary worshipper "Finds tongues in trees, books in running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything." The paving of our highways has paved the way to godliness for the people of Hawaii, they have made stable the unstable sands of our seashore, have wound like ribbons along the cliffs and through the canyons of our mountainous regions, have stretched their shimmering lengths across our productive fields, bearing on their way the messengers of mercy and good-will to man.

Where Queen Kapiolani once led the missionaries who had converted her, over the dangerous path to the crater of Kilauea, the largest active volcano in the world, where against the warnings of her people she defied Pele, their

dread goddess of fire, there now runs a broad, smooth highway over which travelers from all parts of the world may journey in comfort to view the scene of the mighty victory of the Christian religion over heathen idolatry.

Before the cement had set in our first highway there began the cementing of our little isles with the great nations of the world, attracting hitherward those with a message of salvation, cheering and uplifting to our own religious workers. Religion in the Hawaiian Islands is constantly administered to by those who travel from island to island, and from place to place over the good highways. Truly it may be said of Hawaii, "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of holiness;" "And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted."

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Frances O'Harrow  
Jerome, Idaho*

**B**ETTER highway transport brings country communities into closer contact with the rest of the world. Since the coming of improved roads, the people in our neighborhood make the trip to town more frequently, and have more opportunity to attend lectures, Chautauquas, and other educational programs, which stimulate their minds and divert their interest into larger channels. They understand and enjoy a good sermon, and come to church with a desire to gain food for thought; whereas, a few years ago they might have listened to the same address with no thought but boredom. This greater number of contacts gives them more tolerance, too. It was not uncommon in the past for persons in this small community to refuse to go and listen to a preacher whose religious views differed in the least from their own. Nowadays, the variation in opinions is welcomed by them as giving a chance for intelligent and friendly argument. They are broad-minded where they used to be narrow and prejudiced.

Improved facilities for travel have not only accomplished a higher standard of general education for the layman but the pastor himself may fulfill the need he feels to go back to the city and receive fresh stimulus for his work in the way of splendid sermons, beautiful music, religious paintings, and other influences which have stirred his soul before, and which the humdrum life of a country parsonage has been leading him to forget. Other cultured members of the community feel the same urge to renew their acquaintance with the arts, and the lives of those who before have felt lonely and isolated, once more have room for the appreciation of the beauty of Life. Thus the community leaders have a richer store of faith in God from which to supply those about them.

Our community has had a more unified social life since transportation has been made so much easier. Very often when the young people of a family not

habitually church-going find out that all the "crowd" goes to Christian Endeavor or Epworth League, they, too, become members, and, growing interested in church affairs, draw their parents to attending also. A group accustomed to cooperation in social life, as clubs, parties, and Grange, will cooperate more readily in its religious life. In a neighborhood like this there is more friendly intercourse between families, and thoughtfulness for the sick and those in want, and more of an atmosphere of fraternal feeling, than in a scattered and unsocial settlement.

Not only have more people been led to form the habit of going to church, but they have been given less cause to become "weary in well-doing." When the Sunday school teacher often failed to be there, on account of impassable roads, and his or her place had to be filled by a substitute who had not prepared the lesson, the children were disappointed and lost interest. When the congregation arrived at the usual time, but the minister, who had to drive from a neighboring town, was frequently an hour late because of conditions of travel, the attendance was indifferent. On the other hand, when the Sunday school teacher or the minister found himself without class or congregation, he, too, was greatly discouraged and worked less willingly.

Good roads and the automobile, shortening distances, have made it possible to combine two communities into one church, which is bigger and better than either of the two old ones. This larger church can afford to hire a better preacher, and to occupy a better building. Lecturers and preachers, stopping off for a few days in a town near us, may be brought out to our church by a few minutes use of an automobile, and we may have the benefit of an inspiring talk we should have missed otherwise. Delegates from the church and the Sunday school are sent to summer conference miles away, at a cost of only a slight amount for gasoline, and they bring back new methods and fresh enthusiasm. Altogether, better transport has made our services more inspirational and attractive in every way, and we have had good response in the way of church attendance.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Vernon T. Stoutemyer  
Chatsworth, Illinois*

THE influence of roads upon the moral and social life of any community is shown by the conditions of my community, which is representative of the farming districts in the United States. It consists of a progressive village of over one thousand inhabitants, surrounded by a large area of farm land. The road problem has the greatest bearing on those living in this rural district.

The roads compare favorably with those of the average community. The most important is a State road which passes through the center from the East



and West. From this a very fine concrete road runs South to the next township. Many of the other roads are oiled several times each year and are excellent. The majority are dirt, and, in spite of good care, may be almost impassable at certain seasons of the year. However, the roads are becoming better and many improvements are planned.

A very close study of the religious life is made possible by a survey and census which were made recently, showing that over three-fourths of the population have some church affiliation. This is an unusually large percentage and the church attendance is correspondingly high.

One of the most striking changes in the life of this community, as well as most other farming communities, is the disappearance of the rural church.

The true reason for this lies in the present road improvement plans caused by the automobile. When the farmer owned one, he found the drive to the village church, six or possibly ten miles away, to be as easy as that to the nearby rural church. In bad weather he preferred to go to the rural church, but, in the meantime, it had been deserted and found to close its doors.

This consolidation of churches is, in many ways, a very good thing, but it is obvious that unless he has good roads during the entire year the farmer will not add to the strength of the city church. The condition of the roads will always decide whether this change is for the better or worse. This also applies to the consolidated school.

Roads affect the village churches also, because over one-half of their members live on farms. The records of one church for several years past show a sixteen per cent decrease in attendance during the winter months, whereas the large city church would have the condition reversed. A comparison between the church attendance and road conditions make it safe to say, that, given ideal conditions during the entire year, there will be no marked fluctuations.

One of the greatest advantages of road transportation is that it may raise the mental and moral life of the community. In a community in which the rural population does not live a life of forced isolation there is a broader outlook on life. Its people are able to get the needed recreation and relaxation. There is an absence of discontent and restlessness.

As a result of this higher mental living, material welfare invariably follows, and in a short time we have a community with active organizations, such as community clubs, with community houses, the Y. M. C. A., churches, building associations, and many others, all of which uplift the community.

This is coming about in many localities, and in every case the fundamental cause was the cooperation between town and country, made possible by good roads.

# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

By *John S. Grimes*  
*Elwood, Indiana*

"**T**HERE are Mr. and Mrs. Brown in the front pew. My! are not they faithful? They are here every Sunday and have to come three miles to church." Every church in Elwood had its Mr. and Mrs. Brown twenty or thirty years ago; patient, indefatigable, loyal people, impelled by a faith amounting, in the eyes of others, almost to fanaticism, a faith that led them to endure a long, weary drive over roads that were a frozen, bumpy mass of ruts in winter, a sea of mud in spring and fall, and a choking inferno of dust clouds in summer. They were few and far between, for not many had the courage to face that ordeal. The rest stayed at home, isolated from the outside world, spending a dreary Sabbath. The more religious ones refrained from labor, sometimes observing the day with prayers, maybe a hymn or two. The others, ignoring the age old custom, labored as long on Sunday as any other work day in the hard life; for it was a hard life in those days when every farm was a little island, when roads were too bad to permit of any but the scantiest of communication with one's neighbors.

In town, conditions were a little better than in the country around, but even there highway transport was a thing little considered, and the community showed it not only physically, but morally and spiritually.

Poor communication and little association with others bred a spiritual narrow-mindedness that was the bane of religious life. Churches there were, a few struggling for existence, condemning all other creeds than their own. "All the world is damned except me and thee and I have my doubts about thee," was the belief in that semi-barbarous time in Indiana's history known as the "Mud Road Period."

Today the roads of Elwood, Indiana, and vicinity are no longer regarded as objects of jokes for the foolish and of sorrow for the wise. From the center of Main Street concrete highways radiate to the cardinal points of the compass. The old mud roads over which toiling horses strained have vanished and in their places are concrete and gravel roadways over which the farmer's machines speed. The old order is gone forever and a honking horn has ushered in the new. A vast change has come over the community in both its practical and spiritual phases. Its practical side has no place here; suffice to say it has revived a dead town.

The change in the concrete phase of the community's religious life is more easily distinguishable than the abstract. The church buildings are more numerous and more imposing. In a radius of six miles around Elwood there are ten flourishing churches where fifteen, even ten, years ago there were none. The membership of the older churches is more than double, despite the fact

that the town had declined in population, due to the failure of the gas boom on which its existence seemed to depend; and this increase can be due only to the enormous improvement in the highways of the surrounding vicinity.

The less easily discernible, the abstract change in the religious life, has been even greater. The world has grown smaller. People, who a few years ago thought of a journey of twenty-five miles over the country roads with awe, now talk as familiarly of Florida and California as if they were located in the next county, and every year there is an increasing number of worshipers in the most wonderful church of all, the Great Outdoors.

As a natural result of the contact with outsiders had come a broader view of life and Divine Forces. Vanishing is the old doctrine of eternal damnation and a brighter view of the future has taken its place. The change has not been accomplished in a day nor in an hour, nor is it yet complete, but it has come nevertheless and it has come to stay.

The improvement upon highway transport has not had an uncontaminated influence for the good upon the religious life of my community. It has laid the town within easy reach of the bad booze and loose morals of the larger surrounding cities of which opportunity the less conscientious ones have been not slow to take advantage. But nevertheless (the opinion of all theologians to the contrary) the route to the Church and God lies not over a "straight and narrow path, full of bumps and pitfalls," but over a broad, level, well-drained, hard surface road.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Proctor W. Maynard  
Hawarden, Iowa*

**I**MAGINE a small town of about 200 inhabitants nestling in a moderately prosperous farming valley. It is Sunday morning. The hitching sheds behind the five churches contain in all about fifty teams. It is the season of the spring rains. All the roads are muddy and almost impassable. The people attempting to drive to church find it a slow, disagreeable task.

Throughout the valley are scattered a half-dozen more churches. The total attendance of these would not crowd the capacity of one. In each, the pastor, looking first at the handful of people and then at the muddy, sloppy roads outside, finds it impossible to put himself very deeply into the services and they are conducted in an indifferent manner.

At this season the religious morale of this community is at ebb-tide. Many people, having lost the habit of attending church, find it hard again to re-establish it. The pastor finds it very difficult to visit those within his territory.



Thus he fails to see their needs and they cannot come to know and understand him. He has a large field, but, due to the lack of adequate transportation, it is practically untouched.

In this valley eleven churches are working at cross-purposes and almost nothing is being accomplished. In each church an underpaid pastor is endeavoring to hold his little group together and build up a strong church against almost overwhelming odds. There is no social center for the community and each family is a self-centered group of its own.

This is a picture of the conditions existing in my community a decade ago.

Contrast this picture with conditions in this same community today. Instead of five struggling churches we find three strong churches. On Sundays from fifty to two hundred cars are parked in front of each church. Each congregation has grown from a handful of half-hearted people to a hundred or more enthusiastic workers.

Driving through the country, instead of a half-dozen small churches, we find two well-filled churches. Going into one, the pastor, an energetic young man, greets us. He tells us that his congregation is supporting the church in every possible manner and that there is hardly a family that does not attend some church regularly.

After the service is over we again question him about his work. He tells us that he finds his work much easier than formerly and that he is able to do more. He spends much time visiting the farmers of his district. He finds it easier to diagnose the needs of his people and to remedy them. He finds that he is able to cover a much larger territory and visit many more people and that as a result of this, many people have been induced to come to church who formerly did not attend. He is holding community nights once each month. At these meetings talks are given, community sings are held, and after this motion pictures are run. Plays and programs are often put on and the church is used for community gatherings of every sort. The young people have formed an organization and meet once each week, holding a social gathering once a month. Each church has filled the need for a social center in its district. He tells us that one of the biggest benefits to the community is that the churches are no longer working at cross-purposes, but have got together, divided the community into districts, and now each has a definite district to work in.

Marvelling at this wonderful transformation, we wonder what is responsible for this change, so we question one of the ministers. When asked what is responsible he replies instantly, "Roads! A few years ago the roads at this time of year were almost impassable. Today you have driven throughout this valley without once striking mud. Good roads. That is the answer. They have enabled highway transport to change from a slow, tedious, disagreeable task to a pleasant recreation."

And driving away we come to realize that the greatest benefit to our com-

munity today is the coming of good roads and improved means of highway transport.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Lee S. Green  
Mankato, Kansas*

**S**I MORTON and his pessimistic friend, Obadiah Williams, were arguing the good roads question. Both were natives of Fairhill, a town which is to Kansas as Gopher Prairie is to Minnesota. Just now the conversation centered on religion.

"Yes, siree," Si remarked as he spat forth abundant evidence of his prevailing vice, "Yes, siree, these here good roads are ahelpin' the Lord's work right here in Fairhill. I tell you, that hard-surfaced road through this town is adoin' a mighty lot o' work for religion."

"Si, you are a durn fool," stated Obadiah with ire.

"Obadiah," replied Si, as he took a brand new chew on his plug and settled down to one of his frequent spells of moralizing, "you are a twice durn fool. And seein' as how it'll take someone with brains to explain this proposition to ya, I kinda reckon it's up to me to do so.

"Obadiah, I came to this here country when I was just about so high and I hev just practically grown up with this here section. I reckon, what with the hoppers 'n' all, I've seen some pretty hard times both for religion and for everything else. I've seen the time when that road out there that's so bright and shinin' now was hub deep with mud and them days wasn't so long ago either. An' just as long as them roads was mud an' nuthin' much 'cept mud, there wasn't much o' what you'd call religious activity in this here community. O, I know there was churches, but nobody ever came becuz half the time it was too muddy and the other half there wasn't any preacher becuz the flock hereabouts couldn't afford to pay for any herdin'. This town didn't amount to nothin' becuz nobody took any interest. They were too poor and they couldn't market their crops. You can just lay all o' that to bad roads, Brother Obadiah." Here Si paused, took a second chew and settled his fat person more comfortably.

"Obadiah, I'm just requestin' you to cast your eyes about at present. First, I want to direct your attention to these here good roads. I'm not denyin' they cost money, but they're worth it. The people hereabouts are prosperous. Their farms have increased in value. Even you can see that. They've got a market the year round. What's more, they're happy, and bein' both happy and likewise prosperous is point number one in bein' religious, Obadiah. This town ain't very large, but it's got four good churches and everyone of 'em's filled to capacity both for Sabbath school and church. What's

more, they pay their preachers and pay 'em handsome. They've got good buildings and more money, which is due to those same good roads. Yes, and they're bein' a lot more neighborly with other towns, they git more speakers here, and they open up their pockets fer anything that'll benefit this here community and their fellow-men. The people come every Sunday fer miles to hear the parson. All they gotta have is a gas buggy and a good road, and they have 'em both.

"Obadiah, it don't cause a feller with brains no trouble to see all these advancements. No, siree, I tell you, Obadiah, these here same good roads that's acausin' you so many fits is a exercisin' a powerful big influence on the community religion. I'm a tellin' you, Obadiah."

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Ruth Connely  
Houma, Louisiana*

**A**MONG the cypresses and palmettos of the Louisiana coast, the pirate Lafitte and his robber band once sought refuge from the law. Near the mouths of the bayous live decendants of these sea robbers together with the children of Evangeline's people, many of whom continue in their primitive Acadian customs. To the native Indian were added French, Spanish, and English settlers who furnished a varied population.

The towns reached by railroad developed a high type of civilization. Churches had been established in the populated districts, but the remote places were at a low ebb in religion. During the rainy season missions in the isolated sections were inaccessible except by means of luggers plying on the bayous. During the influenza epidemics one of our physicians remarked: "Only the butcher, the baker, the doctor, and the preacher know the disadvantages and the suffering attendant upon poorly constructed roads."

The first factor to furnish a regular system of communication, therefore, was the improvement of the highways. Now a hundred miles of completed model roads, with numerous bus transfers running on schedule time, and twelve hundred automobiles in our parish, indicate the improved transport system.

The use of cars opened up the far-removed districts and offered the dwellers in the hamlets the advantages of consolidated churches at the county-seat. In all of these, services, choir practicings and women's organizations, are much better attended. A school bus has, in one case, been chartered and brings twelve children to Sunday school regularly.

One of the cases of improved religious conditions due to better transportation may be found on Bayou Du Large, where a settlement of trappers and hunters



were for many years unreached by any teachers. Now the Episcopal minister visits them regularly, and his work has resulted in awakening these people spiritually, mentally, and morally. With their own hands they have built a church which is also used as a school where both children and adults, eager to learn, attend classes. The Young People's Service League gave the mission their first Christmas tree, which was illuminated with electric lights connected with a car battery. The torch of civilization thus shed its rays into one of the darkest parts of our community. Cooperation and friendliness were engendered, and the qualities of leadership in the town club developed.

A colony of Swedenborgians lived on the edge of our Parish to whom the Presbyterian minister finally worked his way. This settlement, too, had donated a lot and built a church; but services were necessarily intermittent until a road had been built. Now these members can attend church in town and the minister reaches them at any time, often taking a number of people out there to Union Services.

The work of the Methodist church has been phenomenal. This denomination has built a \$20,000 church in our town which many country people attend. The recently purchased Wesley Home will open a school in September. Fifteen young boys from the poorer classes of the rural districts have applied for the paid-up scholarships which indicates the demand for such a work. This church owns a tent for revival services in the country and has a mission at Point-au-Chien, a settlement so near the coast that it has been properly termed the "jumping-off place." The advantage of communication there is evidenced in the customs of modern civilization both religious and secular, that are being gradually introduced.

The Roman Catholic churches have much larger congregations; the country children attend the communion classes regularly, and the people for twenty miles patronize church fairs.

The Negroes, too, have benefited by the improved transport condition. At a recent conference of theirs, the attendance was so large that in five days the offerings amounted to \$2,000.

In addition to concrete results, the transport system has an intangible influence on religious life. It develops community spirit by breaking down isolation and prejudice, furnishes better acquaintance among the denominations, and affords a personal contact of the scattered groups. Neighborliness is no longer confined to those living close together, but develops into that broad principle of religion in accordance with the teachings of our Saviour.

# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Arline Palmer  
Bangor, Maine*

**I**N SPEAKING of the influence of highway transport upon the religious life of the community, it must be remembered that the work of the church is three-fold. The three branches of modern religious life are religious education, worship, and social service.

The value of good roads cannot be too highly emphasized in connection with religious education, the first and most important of the three. Religious education would be practically impossible without highway transport. Summer schools and conferences can be held more often and are attended by more people when transportation is easy.

The automobile helps the pastor to take care of two churches. Thus a little church in a country town may have services even though it cannot afford to pay a minister for his full time.

Religion includes not only man's attitude toward God and the church, but toward his fellow men as well. In developing the "courtesy of the road" people learn to apply the Golden Rule in their daily lives. For instance, when a man has interrupted his trip for half an hour to help a comrade with a troublesome car, he feels that he has made a friend and fulfilled the command, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

It might be thought that good roads decrease rather than increase the congregation. This mistaken idea arises from the argument that the automobile leads a person away from the church to spend Sunday pleasure-riding. That is not true. Motoring gives one an opportunity for recreation in the evening. The chance to leave the city during the week is a welcome one and reduces the inclination to seek pleasure on Sunday instead of going to church.

Highway transport also enables many people to attend church services who could not otherwise do so. There are thousands of people who could never go to church but for the good roads. It is enough to discourage anyone's religious instinct to have twenty or even ten miles of bad road between home and the nearest church.

Social service receives great help from highway transport, which enables the social workers to do their work with greater ease and rapidity and to cover a larger area. This is an immense benefit to civilization.

The church receives financial aid from the great economic value of good roads, for the church prospers with its supporters. Well paid preachers and better religious life are the result of good transport.

In concluding, I wish to state that the community with good roads has

better homes, better schools, and better churches than the community with poor ones. In addition to the enormous economic value and convenience of good roads, highway transport has a tremendous influence on the three branches of modern religious life.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Howard Gilbert  
Frostburg, Maryland*

**H**IGHWAY transport, made possible by good, hard-surfaced roads, provides rural communities with the best means of intercommunication. People, like water, must move or they tend to become stagnant. A community isolated by bad roads reflects that condition in its religious life. People become indifferent to their fellow men by lack of contact and opportunities for the exchange of ideas.

As a result, churches and schools are neglected. We find the one or two-room schoolhouse and the church at the crossroads unpainted and poorly cared for.

In parts of our community where there are good roads, the churches and schools are usually large and well cared for. Even when the community is small and without railroad communication, the church is often as large as were some of those in our towns twenty-five years ago. The explanation of this is that better roads have brought the church nearer the rural home, resulting in a larger field of work, and an increased membership for the church.

With that increased membership, the churches have been able to obtain better educated religious workers, because good roads make the people more prosperous and better able to contribute to the support of the church. Also, religious workers are more willing to go into rural communities when they are able to move about with ease and comfort.

People in rural communities where there are bad roads attend church probably on an average of about once a month. Where there are good roads, they are likely to attend every Sunday, and sometimes during the week as well.

In our larger towns, the number of parked automobiles shows that many have made use of this modern convenience to come considerable distances to attend the religious services. Traveling leads a one to a broader conception of religious life; to realize that other people have ideas on different subjects, and that it is a benefit to share these ideas.

As good roads have been built past our churches and schools, illiteracy and superstition, the foes of religion, have been removed by education. The mind of the community at large becomes more susceptible to religious duties. Good roads and good schools drive out illiteracy, poverty and superstition.



Some rural communities have large, well-equipped and well-attended schools, though they are located in the smaller places; and good roads provide a means for getting to them. Rural communities often have high schools that are large in proportion to their size or population. Most of the pupils attending these schools are able to come long distances quickly and with comfort on account of the modern roads.

This higher education broadens the minds of the people, so that they have a larger and better conception of their religious duties and privileges. Since the children of today are the parents and leaders of tomorrow, their minds should be broadened along these lines. Modern highways are doing a large part of this important work.

First-class highways are improving the social life of rural people, who otherwise would be practically isolated. Good roads allow them to travel about easily, and to come in contact with neighbors and friends. They now have large social gatherings that were practically impossible with unimproved roads. This promotes a better social life among the rural people, and has a beneficial effect upon their religious life.

Residents along good roads, particularly out in the open country, have a tendency to improve the appearance and surroundings of their homes and buildings. The roads also make it easier for them to transport their products to market, and give them a wider marketing area. Thus, the people enjoying these advantages are made more prosperous by good roads and have time and inclination for other activities than the work upon which their livelihood depends.

Among other things, they have more desire to attend church and social gatherings, as well as special events like fairs, where they meet each other and exchange ideas. Better methods learned in these and similar ways add to their prosperity and broaden their interests. They are then better able to support their churches and schools; and thus, greatly benefit the religious life of the people.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Clarence S. Dohoney  
Lee, Massachusetts*

ON THE nation-wide complaint of the clergy, that the automobile is ruining the spirit of Christianity among Americans, we are tempted to investigate its influence upon our own community; for the most logical manner of learning its effect is to investigate the many different localities which exist under various conditions, and, like charity, this investigation should begin at home.

My community, the town of Lee, is subject to a continuous flow of heavy traffic throughout the greater part of the year, as three popular highways meet almost in the center of the town. Besides heavy commercial traffic a great army of tourists invades our shady streets daily during the touring season, for we are situated in the picturesque Berkshires which every motorist in New England takes delight in touring.

The population of the village numbers over four thousand and supports five churches, four of them located on the main highway, an important fact to consider.

The motor car has been of great advantage to the parishes of the district. From the farms in the outlying country it transports whole families to services on Sunday mornings, which would be well nigh impossible without this efficient means.

It also makes church attendance easier for the residents of the village proper, for many cars can be seen any Sunday morning parked before the leading churches; and on Sunday afternoon when services are held at that time. The automobile also increases the attendance at church on Sunday when rain and other weather conditions tend to keep people at home.

The church officials themselves find the motor almost indispensable, for they can reach any member of their scattered parish in a very few minutes in cases of sickness, death, or other emergencies. Three of our rectors own cars which, besides increasing the respect for the gentlemen of the cloth, add another pleasure to their very limited number.

In a recent drive for funds for a hospital built by a certain religious denomination, one hundred and fifty thousand dollars were collected within a week in Berkshire County with the use of automobiles. Without this rapid means of transportation, the solicitors could not have covered their wide territories in such a brief space of time, and the fact that some of the donors had to be approached several times illustrates the excellent advantage of the motor car in such cases.

Some churchmen claim that improved transportation induces people to go touring on Sunday, thereby neglecting their church duties. But my father has been a car owner for eight years and has never missed Sunday morning services during that time, except for sickness or some other imperative reason, although the car has carried him and the rest of his family to church almost every Sunday morning since he has enjoyed the use of one.

Among the cars parked in front of the local churches on Sunday it is not uncommon to see some bearing license plates of other states, proving that many Sunday tourists attend church services on their trips, having planned it so before hand.

Many people go to camps at our neighboring lakes on Saturday and stay until Monday, thereby neglecting their religious duties. As these lakes are

accessible by auto, the auto is blamed for this negligence, but what is more absurd than that? It is the glory of God's own nature that is the direct cause whereas the motor enables the campers to travel back into town for worship. Many do who are so inclined.

It is true that some disturbance is created by Sunday traffic, but the modern motor car is so well constructed that most noises are eliminated, therefore any severe disturbances are due to poorly constructed roads. Some trucks pass through on the Sabbath, but they are so few that the noise created by them is hardly worth mentioning.

To review the whole situation, we find that the auto carries people to church, and away from church; it smuggles liquor and captures bootleggers; it aids auto bandits and it pursues them.

Perhaps this applies to every community, but I conclude from observations in my own town that the effect of the automobile upon religious life depends entirely upon those who own them.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Benjamin De Graff*  
*Grand Rapids, Michigan*

DEPICT a city of 150,000 inhabitants situated in the heart of a prosperous farming and fruit growing country, with miles of gravel and cement roads stretching out in every direction like a huge spider-web entangling in its meshes a dozen or more small towns within a radius of fifteen miles. A decade ago to have taken this area or even the city alone as a community would have been absurd; but today with the improved means of communication and transportation their relations have become so interwoven as to make them practically inseparable.

There are many, many things exerting their influence upon the religious life of this country, and they act so in unison that it would be unwise to attach too much importance to some one cause. Nevertheless, highway transport can daily be seen to play an important role.

One of the interesting examples of its influence is that of the downtown churches. For a number of years these churches, despite all their attractiveness, were steadily losing ground, not because religion was failing, but because the churches in the residence sections were more accessible. Now, however, since people no longer have to wait for street cars, they are coming not only from all parts of the city but from miles in the country as well. Indeed, there is one member, a college graduate, who attends regularly from a distance of thirteen miles. The significance of this is more than that which appears on



the surface. It shows that as people become better educated they are seeking the larger churches, and the demand for pastors of higher intellect is becoming greater.

The other churches of the city have a slightly different story to tell. Some members, formerly attending a near-by church, are finding within easy reach a church of a different denomination in which they feel more at home. Many a family car is thus being used as a miniature Mayflower, carrying its occupants from the worship of their former convenience to the worship of their convictions. But the fact that outlying churches are constantly in process of construction or remodeling proves that even this shifting congregation has been no draw-back.

The real country churches of this community are almost a thing of the past, having been replaced by the churches in the small towns, for the farmer naturally seeks the town just as the city man seeks the country. Six or seven miles are nothing to him now. He is swelling the attendance; he is returning for more than one service; he is now staying to Sunday school because he can get home more quickly to take care of his stock. The small town churches are beginning to vie in size and attractiveness with those of the city, and even boast of attracting many visitors from the city.

However, church attendance is not the whole of religion. Besides making it easier for people to come to church, the highway transport has made it easier for the pastors to come to the people, and is helping to overcome one of the greatest hindrances to Christianity—the lack of ministers. Throughout the community pastors and priests are making twice or three times as many calls of mercy as before. Parish priests are holding early mass in the city and then speeding away to some adjoining town for a later service. A number of the churches have organized gospel teams which they send out with quartets or other musicians to take charge of the services where some minister is absent, or to add interest to some special service. Rallies and conventions are becoming more numerous.

To be sure there are instances where the highway transport has helped to take people from the church rather than to it. Thoughtful religious leaders see in this, however, only a challenge to meet a new problem, and they agree that they have not taken full advantage of the possibilities of the new situation. Yet they maintain that the merits of good roads far outweigh their failings, and that as a whole, although improved highway transport has not produced any Pentecostal effects in this community, it has been a boon to the church.

# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Annette Hirschfield  
Duluth, Minnesota*

OUR small church stands on the west side of the double cross-roads. It has been but recently renovated and enlarged. The road passing the church is now a fine gravel highway, and extends for miles through the territory over which the little church holds spiritual sway.

The church is now too small for its present requirements. However, a year ago the church was large enough for the congregation which attended its religious services and social affairs. At that time its membership was restricted to those living within a radius of a mile, since those living further in the country were unable to attend on account of the poor roads. Now suddenly the religious life is animated. The church membership and attendance have increased. This new influx of members is not due to the hiring of a new minister because the minister has been here for seven years. This sudden increase in membership is due to the new road and the consequent traffic which now goes to and fro.

In fact, since the road has been repaired, farmers and their families who had never been heard of in the church circles appeared at church. Many new settlers have moved into the town, bringing with them new ideas and new energy. They also have joined the church, giving to it the advantage of their ideas. Plans are now under way for the erection of a larger church next year to take care of the increased congregation.

The members of the community are now buying cars, and the farmers are able to take their produce to the neighboring markets. With the coming of the new road, tourists pass through the hitherto unheard of village. Tourists mean greater prosperity for they purchase things from the farmer and the town stores. The town is prospering and the church treasury is expanding. The church is always greatly dependent upon the industry of the community.

The church has organized new clubs and the congregation has even put up tables and benches to form a picnic ground at a lake nearby. The increase of prosperity, which the highway transport has brought to this typical, sluggish, American village, enables the church in which the farmers are now able to be interested to do bigger, broader, and better things. With the improvement in the roads the farmers are no longer kept away from the church, so they have become interested in it, and are proud to help it grow.

So we now find our church the center of the social and civic life of the community, for in a self-respecting American community the church is the axle around which the village life turns. Understanding that a man's physical outlook has a powerful influence on his mental outlook, the minister now finds

it easy, due to the good roads, to visit those families that have been outlawed by the church members and he shows them that religion is necessary to true citizenship. Former hatreds are now fast vanishing under the new religious life hitherto dormant in the community life.

For the first time in the history of the community the youth are taking an interest in the church and its affairs. Leadership is being developed by the church clubs. The moral and social life of the young people has been greatly improved due to their frequent association with each other. The church affairs supply their social enjoyments and the Bible study and current event classes are organized for their mental and intellectual enjoyment and advancement. This work is practical and it results in better manhood and womanhood. The ambitions and ideals of the young people in our community are already nobler and finer. Lawlessness and profanity are practically unknown. Cooperation has been substituted for disunion and division.

In cooperation with the young people, the minister has organized social service work. This work serves a double purpose. It teaches the young folk the meaning of the word service, and it brings joy to the sick and needy. The young people visit the sick and needy frequently now, for the roads are good and they are able to travel easily. This work instills in them a love for their fellow-man and shows them the great joy in serving another. Through this kind of work personality is developed, for each one feels himself or herself indispensable in the common service. A kindly, helpful, and neighborly sentiment is thus established in the community.

No longer are the members of the community strangers to each other. The church is their common meeting ground. The poor roads which had before made an isolated settlement are removed, and each member of the community is working for the betterment of the community. The ideas and ideals of the church are being carried out and the people are happy and enterprising. A spirit of brotherhood, God's own gift, is felt by all for all.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Laura Russell Archer  
Vicksburg, Mississippi*

**I** DWELL in the heart of one of the most productive lands in the world, widely known as the "Mississippi Delta." Cotton had for years been considered king, and the tireless efforts of the planters to raise still larger crops so overshadowed everything else as to render social, intellectual, and spiritual progress almost impossible. Every one living in our neighborhood seemed to be imbued with the sole desire to accumulate money. Having acquired it, he intended to make his home in some near-by city. There both social and



religious, as well as high intellectual advantages, could be fully enjoyed. There might be found fine schools, beautiful churches and eloquent preachers, all so foreign to the Delta country of that day and time.

The result was that our neighborhood was becoming rapidly depopulated, and those who remained were intensely dissatisfied. A truly deplorable condition existed. No one seemed able to reach an intelligent solution of the dilemma. Something was radically wrong. What was it? Our public roads were "loblollies" of mud throughout their entire extent. Rude buildings, situated here and there in widely separated communities, served as combination schools and churches. However, since the roads were practically impassable during the greater part of the year, the attendance at both school and church was irregular. Nor were the roads in sufficiently good condition to permit even the itinerant preacher to hold services more often than once each month, without serious detriment to our religious welfare.

What should we do? Should we leave our fertile lands deserted, and go forth to seek a different field in which we would most probably be disappointed? Or, should we endeavor to improve our home conditions? We well knew that the first step toward our uplift must be found in the improvement of our roads. We feared, however, that the cost of a permanent highway across the alluvial loam of our section might be prohibitive. But after laborious efforts on the part of our influential men for the betterment of the community, the county agreed in 1918 to issue good roads bonds, for building thirty miles of hard surfaced highway. It goes without saying that this was a success and a great one.

So that now with the added assistance of the Federal government, our beautiful Delta is being traversed by The Mississippi Scenic Highway. This highway which follows as closely as possible the course of the great river extends from its source to the city of New Orleans.

The State Highway Commission is now cooperating with the authorities of the county, in the building of various branch roads. Before long these little "radiating antennae," as it were, will penetrate our most remote districts. This improvement in highway transportation is reflected in every walk of life, and arouses such civic interest as to astonish the most optimistic. The coming of the automobile has contributed to these benefits and economic conditions.

We now have a resident pastor, who has become through our intimate social, and religious intercourse, our faithful guide in all the more important affairs of our daily lives. He knows our minds and our souls; our strength and our weaknesses. He counsels and advises against the tempting allurements of the world, and keeps us well within the bounds of that other good road, which leads to happiness and life eternal.

Although many of us have left for a time the confines of our real "Treasure Valley," and beheld what lies in the cities and the lands beyond, we are at last content with our charming little nook in a true "God's Country." For

here it has become so easy to feel and understand that our very closeness to Nature and her glorious God-given belongings will keep us, at all times, free from contamination. Our good roads are the foundation of our happiness.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Viva Fay Cox  
Salem, Missouri*

**I**MPROVED highway transport, with its better means of communication and transportation, has greatly increased the religious and social understanding among the people of my community and disclosed to view common purposes and ideals.

The little country church of ten years ago, with its bare walls, poor ventilation, dim lights and wooden benches, located back among the hills of the Ozarks, represented the ultimate social service of the community. Here, on a Sunday morning, the people of the community met for their weekly measure of religious thought. It served a very small neighborhood, for travel over these hills was not so enticing as now. The roads, if such narrow trails could be called roads, were rocky, uneven, and often very muddy. Some of the people walked to church, others came on horseback and some in wagons and buggies. The whole family, in most cases, came together, with the possible exception of a big brother who happened to possess a horse.

No part of the program was planned for the young folks. During the greater part of the service the older boys remained outside, playing marbles, trading knives or trying out each others horses' gaits. A few of the younger children were cooped up in the house with their parents and told to "sit still and listen to the preacher." Many of them escaped to the yard where they played in the mud, frightened horses, got into scraps, and other kinds of mischief, while their elders sat in the stuffy church and paid respectful attention to the preacher.

This represents a typical rural church in the Ozarks some few years ago—a community hemmed in by the formidable hills and bad roads. The small town was especially distant to these rural people. They felt that the town church and its members were socially above them and they had no desire to mingle with "city folks."

Likewise, in the town, the people knew nothing of their rural neighbors and had no interest in them. They entered their little village church and sang their dear old hymns, but their scope of religious work was limited to their own members and to the people of the church neighborhood which did not extend beyond the town limits.

Today, gradually but surely, improved highway transport with its good

roads and the advent of the automobile has bridged the distance between these little rural communities and the town church. The social barriers have been thrown aside and many of the people of these small neighborhoods have found common interests with one another and with the town communities. The town, with its larger and stronger churches, is now the center of our religious and social life, and its members come from all over the community. It affords us more widespread opportunities to extend our association with others; to broaden our religious knowledge; and to enjoy the benefits of beautiful music. Appropriate amusement and instruction have been planned for our young folks and many more of them are being drawn within the influence of the church. In this way, our church works in closer connection with the school, the home, and the social life of our community. We have come to realize that our religious wants are closely bound up with our other wants. We find our church growing more active by looking after the health interests, the educational interests, and the social and recreational interests of our whole community.

It is true that the little rural church has ceased to satisfy the needs of our community life. Our small neighborhood churches are passing out of date and being replaced by consolidated churches. The religious work is carried on in a more systematic manner; more efficient religious instruction is received and a broader field is served.

Improved highway transport has been the means of better understanding and wider association in our community religious life. We are becoming better acquainted with each other and are beginning to comprehend the great principle of religion: "My church is your church, my God is your God."

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Edward A. Tamm  
Butte, Montana*

"Give me the clear blue sky overhead,  
And the good road to my feet,  
And a dog to tell my secrets to,  
And a brother tramp to greet—  
With an inn at the end of day for rest,  
And the world may keep its bays—  
For these are the gifts of the wayside gods,  
And the gifts that I would praise."—*Fernandez.*

THE history of Montana is written in her highways. These highways have evolved from the Indian trail. This evolution has kept pace with the development of the state. Throughout the cycles of change the condition of highways either promoted or retarded the spread of religion.



The narrow serpentine Indian trails afforded the zealous missionaries an opening to the wigwams of the red men. It was over these perilous paths that the "Black Robe," Peter J. DeSmet, S. J., in 1840 rode on horseback from St. Louis to cast his lot among Montana's Flathead, Crow, and Blackfoot Indians, rather than have these dusky children of the forest "die in darkness, and go by longer paths to other hunting grounds."

As the years rolled by, the trail widened and gave place to the modern road. The caravan brought fur-traders, trappers, doctors, and ministers, together with their families. And then in 1862 came a deluge—a deluge of pioneers. "Paydirt" was found on Grasshopper Creek where now is the small town of Bannock, and a host of emigrants from the East came in ox-drawn wagons and settled in camps. Religion troubled these people very little at first, but after many camps were formed and homesteads were staked, religious instruction and consolation were again in demand.

Thrifty gold-seekers scattered their huts along the roadside; some near by, and some a great distance from the original camps, and with this state of affairs began a new mode of travel; namely, the stage coach, drawn by four horses, running on schedule time, and carrying passengers, baggage, and mail. The roads were invariably rough, muddy, or steep. The horses were constantly struggling to get up a bank, or floundering in the mire, or stumbling on the rough clods, or racing along a mountain side. The traveller was in constant fear of a "hold up," and yet he hazarded the journey.

The missionary and minister risked the road in search of souls for God. They dwelt, as a rule, in the largest camp and visited an outside camp each week. The scattered members of their flocks came to camp if the roads were passable and the weather fine. They attended the service, they had their children baptized, they got what news they could of the world at large, and then climbed into the big green-boxed wagon and jogged along home, arriving there at evening if no accident occurred. But the lukewarm Christians, because of the inconvenience of the road, remained at home, grew daily more indifferent to their religion, and finally lost their faith.

Soon, however, the settlers realized the necessity of better roads. The demand was soon as generously supplied as have since been other demands in Montana; and today we boast of paved streets and boulevards not only from the larger to all the surrounding smaller towns, but also wending their ways among the mountains.

These highways have wonderfully improved the state, and are making the practice of religion easy. Over their smooth surfaces the automobiles travel, and men forget the distance of the journey in the joy of a swift and certain ride. Whole families go to church together. No longer does the mother need to fear fatigue, nor the father need to swear at the mud holes. The children look forward with eagerness to the Sunday ride, and crowd the pews at Sunday school. The road is no longer an excuse for non-attendance at Sunday service,

nor is it a reason for neglecting to call the priest or minister when the danger of death is upon one. Within a half hour after such a call, any minister of the Gospel in this city, Butte, can reach the bedside of the dying in any suburban town. We have a paved road leading through Rocker and Silver Bow to Anaconda. We have a well-built road to Gregson and Warm Springs, and will soon begin the work of paving Montana Avenue. It is an acknowledged fact that because of these road facilities, religion flourishes in city and country alike, comforting and uplifting souls that would otherwise perish.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Walter G. Rundle  
Orleans, Nebraska*

THE influence of highway transport upon the religious life of my community is beyond estimation. I have made my observations in a small town in south central Nebraska. Inasmuch as it is in the small town that the influence of highway transport upon religious life is so vital and so keenly felt, the effects that I have observed are, without doubt, applicable to other similar communities.

For many years it was a custom, grown out of necessity, for the churches of my community to lead an isolated existence. The only way in which they came into contact with outside influence was through sending a delegate to inter-church conventions. This means failed to benefit those who stayed at home.

By virtue of highway transport this condition has been changed. Distance is no longer a barrier. Highway transport facilities have made it possible to maintain a close relationship with churches outside of the immediate locality. The result of this has been an awakening and an increased interest in church activities. This was made evident, two years, when two hundred representatives of this locality attended the State Convention of Sunday schools, held in a town thirty miles distant. The influence of this convention was apparent in the resulting religious development. Had it not been for highway facilities this valuable impetus would have been lost.

The following year the District Convention of the Epworth League was held in the same neighboring town. Because of good roads, it was possible for a large number of the young people of our League to attend. This convention has had a marked influence upon religious life. The plans proposed there have been put into operation. As a result, our regular attendance has more than doubled; two members have pledged themselves to life service; ten of the members have become titheers; and the social department is grasping and holding the interest of the young people in a manner heretofore unknown.

The Epworth League Institute and Assembly are held in Lincoln, two hundred miles from my town. The highway connections with Lincoln make it possible to send five delegates by auto with less expense than is required to send one delegate by train.

Highways have influenced the religious life of rural districts of this community by bringing country people into closer contact with the religious life of the town. Pastors are now able to call upon rural members as easily as upon resident members. By these frequent personal visits, close fellowship is maintained. Because of good roads, country people have become active workers in the church, teachers in the Sunday schools, leaders in young peoples societies and are participants in all of the religious and social activities of the church. This has brought about a great development in religious life.

Inasmuch as maintaining a church in a small town involves a difficult financial problem, it would be well to consider the influence of good roads upon this phase of religious life. Formerly, it was difficult to meet the expenses of the local churches with the pastor's salary never exceeding twelve hundred dollars. Now, with a highway system enabling country people to attend and enjoy services, one of the churches has been able to increase this sum to twenty-five hundred dollars. The churches of the community are in the best financial condition in their history.

That Handel's "Messiah" has been sung each year, for thirty years, in the Spring Festival held in Lindsborg, Kansas, is widely known. The railway connections from here to Lindsborg are so poor that no one would care to make the trip by train. But, with the splendid Golden Rod Highway passing through this part of the state and connecting with the Sunflower Trail in Kansas, it is possible to make the trip of two hundred and fifty miles in ten hours. Each year, many people from this community drive to Lindsborg and hear that inspiring oratorio sung.

All such contacts with places and people outside of the immediate locality have a deepening and widening influence upon the religious life of the community. Keen observers cannot fail to recognize this fact and will become enthusiastic advocates of the national good roads movement.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Alice Brown  
Reno, Nevada*

FOR over forty years Nevada has been a field of increasing activity in the religious world. However, two-thirds of the tireless activity and restless energy of those indomitable ones who early recognized Nevada as a desirable missionary field was wasted. In spite of the work of Episcopalian, Methodist



and Baptist, and of all men who endeavored to bring before the people the need of religious progress, there was a deplorable lack of religious development in the Silver State. Her early settlers were chiefly miners and emigrants seeking the fabulous gold of the West. For many years there was a continuous stream of men, some entering Nevada filled with a vision of enormous wealth, led on by the "god of gold," some leaving, broken in body and spirit, denied even a faith in God to lead them back. There is a lack of permanence in such a country. Towns and cities built in a night, have gone down just as suddenly. Rawhide, once a city boasting of five thousand inhabitants, in 1916 had a population of one hundred and sixteen; Bullfrog, once four thousand, had fifteen.

Agricultural development, hindered by lack of means of transportation and of travel, took on a form very different from that of the East. On a ten thousand acre ranch a foreman and his family lived, never seeing a church or hearing the word of God.

In 1916 Bishop Hunting estimated that there existed over one thousand communities of from fifty to one hundred people who cared only for religion as death called them. On farms lived hundreds of Italians, who had replaced the Anglo-Saxons, gradually losing all faith and knowledge of a God to whom they could turn in time of trouble or death. Nevada had never known that sublime religious belief that gives satisfaction and comfort, and shelter from all restless questioning.

Finally there came the awakening, the realization of how closely the development of religion in a community was interwoven with its commercial growth. Now in Nevada, with the building of good roads, has come new religious development. Perhaps there is no other state in the Union in which good roads and religious progress are so closely interwoven. With the passing of time, the former inaccessible passes over mountains and deserts have been bridged by good roads. With good roads has come a permanent religion. Centralization has taken the form of the traveling church in rural communities. A good machine fitted for camping, carrying a five-foot library, has brought peace and religious belief to the fifteen at Bullfrog, and to the few Italians on each of the scattered ranches. The rectors of churches in settled communities are enabled to do their utmost by going each month to the numerous small communities which are unable to support a church. Tonopah and Goldfield combine and circuit work is done throughout the state.

In yet another way have good roads aided Nevada in religious development. Through them Nevadans have come to know the God of the out-of-doors, the God of nature. Those who spend hours driving along the roads, which at every turn bring added reminders of His munificence and impress upon us the immensity of His Creation, believe in God as they have never believed in Him before. They find Him in the early morning hours when the patchwork fields in the valley and the brown sage-covered hills are yet wet

with dew, in the pure glory of noon, and in the evening when the long shadows turn the reddish-gold sands to softer grey.

Today Nevada enjoys a vastly extended religious horizon. She has found, in a measure, the peace of which the first prospector dreamed. It is not the quiet peace of a golden California poppy field in April, nor even the peace of painted deserts and purpled opalescent mountains crowned with snow; but rather the peace of a great trans-Pacific liner, peace that involves progress along the mighty river to the mightier ocean of God. Thus it is to miles of white paved highway, stretching over her hills and deserts, that Nevada owes her progress and peace.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Margaret Hall  
Manchester, New Hampshire*

GOOD roads have a marked effect upon the spiritual life of this part of the country both in the rural districts and in the more thickly settled parts. Let us first consider the rural districts. Stockley is a small country town which nestles between two great mountains. Here, for many years, an academy for boys and girls has been conducted and managed by the local church. For the past few summers, automobile parties from the neighboring towns and cities have met at this place for a religious convention using the girls' dormitory for headquarters. These meetings have been of lasting benefit not only to the local church but to the whole denomination throughout the state; for they have been a source of inspiration to all those who have attended. Furthermore, both the school and the town have received so much advertising on account of these conferences that the girls' dormitory is now opened as a summer hotel, thus attracting many people to an otherwise obscure place. All this could not have happened before the days of good roads and the advent of the automobile.

There are other ways also in which the motor car may be effective in quickening the religious life of a community. The farmer's journey to church is now short and pleasant instead of long and tedious. He may even go to churches which were hitherto inaccessible and attend services in nearby cities. A short time ago, a large Methodist conference was held in this city at which the Bishop presided. So many people were present that the largest hall in the state had to be used. All the available parking places were taken, a large proportion of the cars coming from outlying country districts. One would think that a large concert was in progress rather than a religious service.

In fact, the number of cars in front of both city and country churches on any ordinary Sunday indicate that many churches are dependent upon the

conditions of the roads for their congregations. It is universally known that hundreds of people are brought to church by automobile who could not otherwise get there. In some churches in this vicinity it is the custom to appoint transportation committees whose duty it is to see that the children are brought to Sunday school and the aged and infirm to church services.

The minister also may do more effective work if he is provided with a car. The following quotation is taken from a prominent religious weekly: "A busy minister needs quick conveyance to conserve his physical strength, his nerves, and his time. . . . Many churches are recognizing the fact that a minister can thus double and treble his service and are making a place on their yearly budgets for his transportation expenses." In this city one of the ministers who owns an automobile is able to conduct afternoon services in a country church which is thirty miles away. This is to the advantage of both the minister and the people; the minister's salary is increased and the country church has the services of a man whom they could not otherwise afford to employ.

The influence that good roads have upon the social life of a church is worth mentioning. It is a pleasant custom among the ladies in one of the churches here to hold neighborhood meetings with church members living within a radius of fifty miles. Each year a different church acts as hostess and a friendliness is thus established which is invaluable in carrying on the work of the denomination. Young people also hold similar meetings which are even more beneficial to the life of the church, because the future of all churches depends upon holding the interest of the young people.

Indeed the religious influence of highway transport upon a community is as far-reaching and beneficial as the social and economic influences. It is certainly the duty of every loyal citizen to see that funds are raised to improve the old roads and to build new ones.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Ethel Dodge  
Bloomfield, New Jersey*

**I**N MODERN times, when everything is so highly organized and life so efficiently managed, the great problem of adequate transportation seems to have been very nearly met. Therefore, we are not apt to be keenly alive to its importance. We take the conveniences and benefits with which we are provided very much for granted.

Yet there still are communities and some very near to us—that are in need of the facilities with which we are able to provide them. They find themselves in comparative isolation from the broadening influences of the busier



life of the city. For, however much poets and city-dwellers may laud the untrammelled freedom and spotless purity of rural life, it still remains a fact that the awful barrier of green, silent hills and the changeless loneliness of great forests may bring havoc to the sensitive, social natures to whom human intercourse means so much.

The isolation of the rural community is primarily a spiritual isolation. In tiny villages, too poor even to afford the most humble building for worship and public gatherings, dozens of families have forgotten what Sunday means; often not even rest from the hard toil of farming is left to them.

Yet they may be at no great distance from churches with long rows of empty pews and a discouraged minister when Sunday comes; Sunday schools consisting of a disorganized handful of children, whose attendance is a matter of uncertainty and whose benefit from such attendance is decidedly more uncertain; and church activity during the week an experiment long since abandoned in despair. The necessity for cooperation here is obvious, and the means as much so. Adequate transportation facilities alone can solve the problem and eliminate the weary miles of muddy roads which made the idea of church attendance so distasteful.

My own community has, I think, been fortunate in having no particular transportation problem, since it is situated close to a large city; but, in the northern part of the town, there is a little district which, until a comparatively short time ago, offered a rather serious difficulty. The section had grown up slowly, and, when the population became larger, it was found that there was only one church—of the Catholic faith—for a section largely Protestant in inclination. Access to the churches in the main part of the town was cut off by very poor means of transportation; few of the streets of the district had been cut through, the town's main street was paved only for a limited distance, and trolleys and buses carried passengers only to that point.

Finally, a member of a Protestant church in the town founded a little chapel to minister to the needs of the homes scattered over the country. Thereupon the buses, following public demand, extended their route in the direction of the chapel. But still, especially in rainy weather, travelling was unpleasant, until at last the town paved the street upon which the chapel stood and the buses lengthened their route for a mile farther into the country. The happy result of this fortunate provision may be seen now in a busy, well-organized little Sunday school, which many of the children of the parent church attend, and which harbors scores of little ones who would otherwise be without the beautiful influence of the Sabbath Day.

Not very long ago the only diversion accessible, upon a warm summer evening, to the restless city dweller was the crowded, stuffy moving picture theatre, or, at best, the dubious delights of a city park. Now the average city family can climb contentedly into the modest auto, and be carried out into the midst of sweet, green fields and fragrant woods, where shy flowers dance

and wild birds sing. The country has, in turn, made her bow to the town, and the highway again has been the connecting link.

So here's to the public highway! May it continue, with its straight, white length, to bind city to country, and human heart to human heart, in close brotherhood and mutual understanding.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Lucille Isaacs  
Clayton, New Mexico*

FIVE years ago there were four poorly supported churches in Clayton, New Mexico, at that time a town of twelve hundred population. Each congregation occupied a small frame structure with a seating capacity of seventy to one hundred. Each building was heated by a stove, so that one part of the audience when there were enough people present to be really called an audience—froze while the other part roasted. On bad days those who attended church had to trudge through mud puddles or flounder along in their buggies or autos through snowdrifts and undrained roads. On such days, and we have many of them during our nine long months' winter, the majority of people stayed at home. However, in spite of poor attendance and other difficulties, the four churches went bravely on, hoping for a better day.

That better day came when a few of our public spirited citizens got their heads together and decided to launch a campaign for improved streets and roads. To crystallize sentiment for these improvements and other matters of public welfare, the Rotary Club of Clayton was organized; soon the Chamber of Commerce sprang into existence; and a City Council and Commissioners' Court favorable to good streets and roads were elected.

The Rotary Club and Chamber of Commerce obtained liberal state and federal aid in the construction of good roads. The City Council employed an expert engineer as city superintendent and bought big trucks and graders for the streets. The Commissioners' Court made heavy appropriations for road improvement, purchased the necessary equipment, and employed a road superintendent. As a result of this awakened spirit, the Clayton streets have been well graded, sidewalks extended, cement crossings put in, drains installed; and the rough, muddy roads leading from all directions to town have been transformed into magnificent highways.

The influence of these improvements on our religious life has been phenomenal. Clayton has grown to a town of three thousand people, and the cases of crime now are fifty per cent less than when we had a population of twelve hundred. Two of the four original churches have built handsome brick and cement structures, each with a gymnasium and banquet hall, in addition to

the main auditorium and Sunday school rooms. The other two churches have made valuable improvements in their plants. Two more churches have been organized, and one of these is planning to erect a beautiful house of worship. The old stoves have given way to steam heat, and other modern equipment has been installed. The young people have organized enthusiastic religious societies, and last year each society had a basket ball team. Community centers and family nights have been inaugurated. The business men now have regular nights on which they meet in the gymnasium of the First Methodist Church and play volley ball. This church also gives two nights of recreation a week to the small boys, the recreation consisting of basket ball and gymnastic work, followed by hot and cold shower baths. The attendance at religious services, once so poor, is now so large that the seating capacity of the churches frequently is taxed. At a union service three weeks ago eight hundred people were present. The people who attend come not only from the town, but also from farms and ranches twenty to forty miles distant. With our splendid highways, the ride on Sunday morning and evening is a pleasure; and, with the audience in a happy frame of mind, the services are an inspiration.

All of the results enumerated above culminate in the one crowning benefit of fostering a wonderfully fine spirit of brotherhood and community harmony. So here in the heart of this great western country differences are being laid aside and all forces united in a deep sincerity of purpose to work for bigger and better things and realize the fulfillment of Robert Burns' dream when he predicted:

"It's coming yet, for a' that,  
That man to man, the world o'er,  
Shall brothers be for a' that."

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Aaron Pliss  
Buffalo, New York*

**A**MONG the hills of western New York nestled the little village of Gowanda. It boasted of a population of several hundred souls. As in most villages the places of business were clustered in the most prominent section of the main street. This business consisted of a provision store, a meat market, an apothecary shop, owned by the village doctor, and a smithy's glowing forge. In an inconspicuous section of the village stood the gloomy little gray, clap-boarded church. On summer Sundays the villagers and the surrounding farmers who could afford the luxury of a buggy were seen winding along the narrow, dusty road to church. The Sundays of the remaining weeks of the year saw only half of the church benches occupied, for, in the rainy months and during winter, only those village people who had boots, and a few steadfast farmers



came. Some farmers thought it "unchristian to drive a horse down steep hills of sticky mud and then almost literally pull him up again;" other valued their horses above the services. So the little church was accustomed during forty weeks to see only half of its congregation.

But that was years ago. Now there is a broad highway of red brick where before ran a dirt road. With this highway has come prosperity to the village as well as to the farmers. Streets have been laid out and buildings remodeled. In short the village has taken on another appearance within the last ten years. This wave of prosperity has reflected most noticeably upon the religious life of the community. The new highway has breathed a new spirit into the churches built in the course of years past to meet the growth of the population. Many of the people, after the road had been constructed, sold their driving horses and bought cars. To these, two courses were open: to follow the luring path to pleasure, or the path to church.

A certain process of elimination took place. Those who chose material enjoyment sought the inviting paths of pleasure; but, on the other hand, the highway brought to the churches worshipers from small surrounding places, like Collins, Lawton, and Dayton, which before had to be satisfied with the services of the simplest character. Finding the services of Gowanda churches on a higher plane than those of the few places of worship formerly accessible, families of five or more began to come in buggies, not as a matter of habit, but as a matter of soul satisfaction. Many made it their business to take the aged and those who have no motors to and from church. So the churches of Gowanda, though losing materially in the village attendance, gained both materially and spiritually from the country round about.

The potency of the churches became more manifest, for about that time eighteen church members formed a Men's Club whose object was the culture of the soul. Their number has since grown to one hundred and eighty, including members from Collins, Dayton, and other small surrounding villages, a thing made possible by the modern highway. Every church in Gowanda is represented. When good men get together, by some gracious law of nature they forget about themselves and think about others. By constant contact with each other and with the rest of the people they have had and, indeed, still have a great share in disseminating religious zeal and enthusiasm. They have voted and subscribed money for church improvements, such as repairs, installing organs, and even for obtaining the service of more able pastors. In town their influence makes the youth think seriously and helps create for him a finer atmosphere.

The Women's Club, a similar organization of one hundred and forty members, has its Christian functions also. On Thanksgiving, Christmas, and at various other intervals it sends baskets to the poor and to isolated little hamlets where the need is greatest, a thing impossible without good roads.

The nine churches of Gowanda, consecrated to the worship of the Almighty, herald the influence of the modern highway upon its religious life.

# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Margaret Beaufort Miller  
Winston-Salem, North Carolina*

**T**HIS Easter, twenty thousand reverent people packed the streets at five o'clock in the morning to hear the inspiring words of the old Bishop, "The Lord is risen! He is risen indeed!" Every Easter, great throngs of people come from far and near to the quaint community of Salem, North Carolina, to attend the beautiful and impressive Easter services at the Home Moravian church. Twenty thousand! A triumph for faith and transportation in my community. Every year, as the fame of the early morning service spreads abroad, more and more people come to attend it. They come from everywhere, some by rail, but mostly over the smooth highways which form a network of continuous transportation, connecting the community with all points in the state. Last year fifteen thousand people were prepared for, and this year even more were expected.

Before the present extensive program of road construction and improvement had been carried out in this county, the Easter services were enjoyed by a comparatively few, composed of the Salem congregation and the townspeople. Now, on account of the splendid roads, it is possible for everyone to attend them.

But aside from this special phase of the religious life of my community, good roads have been of inestimable benefit to the country churches struggling along against the overwhelming odds of irregular attendance and dwindling membership caused by muddy or impassable highways. Truly, the country churches were paying a mud tax from their life blood! A striking illustration of the influence of good roads upon the religious life of my community is the fact that the rural churches have increased in direct proportion to the number of roads constructed or improved. In the town itself the transportation problem, though not so acute as in the rural districts, has a direct bearing on the number of churches the town can support. On my own street, since it has been paved comparatively recently, a brand new church has been built on the site of a former cow pasture.

Not only have good roads made it possible for more people to attend church, but they have opened up myriad benevolent activities hitherto undreamed of. Welfare work among the convicts, the orphans, and the inmates of the county home, and the tuberculosis hospital is doing untold good. The poor are now being discovered and aided by the Associated Charities, the Salvation Army, and kindred societies, where formerly they had been overlooked, not intentionally, but because they were inaccessible. The burden of the minister has been lightened and visiting his flock is now a pleasure instead of the fearsome undertaking it once was. Good roads have immeasurably widened the scope of church work, and so are making Winston-Salem a better place in which to live.

All this has been realized by the cooperation of the forward-looking business men of the community. From a modest beginning twenty years ago has come a system of highways without a peer in the state, and the fulfillment of a civic ideal of cooperation and intercourse between the city of Winston-Salem and its suburbs. Taxes have had to be raised, of course, and people have complained, as they always do. But good roads have paid for themselves many times over in increased commerce and better profits. But more significant than the material gains and wider prosperity which good roads have brought to the community, a deeper interest is being shown in religious and benevolent activities. Road taxes! And then I think of twenty thousand people listening to the solemn words of an old Bishop in the early Easter dawn, and the marvelous transportation system which has made such a thing possible.

Religion and transportation! How essential to each other, and how intimate a part of my community.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Marie Kovar  
Jamestown, North Dakota*

"GOING to church this morning! On the roads that we have? Never!" Just a typical exclamation heard on Sunday on many of the farms in my community. This ought not to be. Every man should have the means of obtaining religious worship. Everyone is born with a religious instinct; every complete life must have religious experience. In order to secure such experience, the religious instinct must be cultivated and trained. It is the church, the organized expression of religious life, that takes our inborn roots of religion and directs and disciplines them for service. It is the church that teaches us the principles of Christianity that gives us our ideals, the spirit of hope, sympathy, and sacrifice, and the vision of eternal life.

To ignore the church is to ignore an essential institution of the community. Where I live the region is settled chiefly by farmers—hard-working people—whose thoughts naturally dwell on crops and prices. It is the church that inspires and gives them vision; that changes material ideas to ethical aims; that converts commercialism to idealism. The church attempts to bring out the best in men, for human character reaches its highest level only by the inspiration and guidance of religious motives. The church influences the moral character of farm life; lifts its social life; fosters the right kind of recreation. Through its socials it develops the play spirit, promotes cheerfulness, friendliness, and cooperation—virtues expressive of religious life.

Highway transportation has a great influence on the church. In my community there are no cement or hard roads. Most of our roads are passable for



about five months. What a difference good highways would make in the religious life!

With good roads there would be no steep grades, no miles of mud. By easier transportation, the farmer could do in six days what he formerly did in seven—thus giving himself his Sabbath. His income would be increased through lower transportation costs. This would make him more willing to join the church because he could give financial support.

Good roads would promote a higher type of citizen, one responsive to church teachings. Farmers would become more neighborly. Farm life would be happier. New homes with modern conveniences would be possible. Farmers would be content to remain on the farm, knowing that education was less difficult and uncertain; and that they could go to church regularly. A closer relation between city and country people would exist. And people of this type are willing and qualified to be personal evangelists for their religion.

Good roads are invaluable for the progress of the church. The membership and size would increase. No woman will come through quagmires of oozy mud in her Sunday clothes. The condition of the road determines whether she and her family will fill their pews. With a good road that is always passable, this uncertainty is removed. Church attendance would be an habitual and necessary event. Those who know they can go to church every Sunday will invariably become members, while intermittent worshippers will not. Then, too, good roads raise the health level, which, too, would increase the Sunday number. Thus, good roads increase the congregation and make attendance more regular.

Good roads would mean a wider range for the church. Pastors could keep in touch with their members. Town people could be missionaries to outlying districts. Last year our town Epworth League started meetings in the country churches, but due to poor roads, the project was abandoned. What a wealth of good might have been accomplished if transportation had been of the best!

In my community, as in any other, the prosperity of the farmer and the condition of the church are closely related. A good farm will be supplemented by a good church. Good roads make for progress and prosperity for the farmer. And where such a state exists, the condition of the church can not help but correspond.

Thus, good roads are synonymous with good churches. Good churches are synonymous with a true religious life. And a true religious life is synonymous with a more law-abiding, peaceful, and progressive community.

# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Ralph Nelson  
Youngstown, Ohio*

WHAT influence highway transport has upon the religious life of my community may be clearly indicated by certain facts, which were gathered from many sections of my community. Also, a few figures for 1922 will show the marked progress made within recent years in highway construction and maintenance.

During 1922, there were 4,300 miles of state roads to maintain in Ohio. Ohio's share of the Federal appropriation was \$2,823,004.05, while her fifty per cent share of the proceeds from the sale of automobile license tags was over \$3,500,000. The Mahoning County General Road Fund amounted to \$252,-643.21. Youngstown's paving expenditures were \$380,302.59 and her total length of paving was 38,032 feet. These figures may seem very large, but I believe the benefits derived, far outweigh the expense.

The three transportation factors that affect the religious life of any community are: (1) The trolley; (2) the automobile; (3) the improved highway. The last two factors work together. When automobiles came into use, a great demand arose for improved highways. With the improvement of highways came a great increase in the use of the automobile. Many of the churches now find it profitable to bring the children in from the country by special bus.

Having sent questionnaires to forty pastors in Youngstown and ten of the surrounding suburbs in the county and having interviewed other pastors, I found that approximately twenty-two per cent of the church people come by automobile, bus or jitney as compared with a nine per cent that come by trolley, the remaining sixty-nine per cent coming by foot. I also found that approximately forty-four per cent of the people come by all improved roads; that fifty-three per cent come by some roads which, though unimproved, are passable in bad weather; and that three per cent of the people come by roads that are made practically impassable in bad weather, thus causing irregular church attendance. This emphasizes the importance of highway transport to regular church attendance in my community.

Bad roads cause irregular church attendance and irregular attendance often leads to no attendance. The religious life of any community depends almost wholly upon church and Sunday school and it is really the people who go to church who make religious life in a community. Therefore bad roads are detrimental to the religious life of a community.

The church busses, because of the improvement of roads, are now able to give country children, some of whom are practically ignorant of any religion, a good religious life by taking them to Sunday school every Sunday.

The Bethlehem Lutheran Sunday school, during the past winter, operated a large school bus on Sundays for the sake of thirty-one children in the rural community who had no means of going to Sunday school. These thirty-one children were not attending any Sunday school. They lived along three or four miles of improved roads. Were it not for the improved highways, which made it possible to operate this bus, many of these children would have grown up practically ignorant of any religion.

On the first day of the bus, one little girl, six years old, was asked by the teacher if God had given her anything to be thankful for. She surprised the teacher by asking "Who is God?" This is one of the many pathetic incidents in the life around us of which we hear very little.

A rural Sunday school, south of Youngstown, doubled its membership in a few months by the use of four busses which covered four respective routes every Sunday morning.

These incidents illustrate how modern highway transportation is working toward the elimination of surplus competitive churches in rural districts and toward the growth of large churches and Sunday schools in community centers.

Through these facts, which were gathered from every section of Youngstown and Mahoning County, I have clearly demonstrated that by continually improving and maintaining the highways of our community, we are enabling the churches, through highway transport, to further their wonderful work of teaching the people to be God-fearing, righteous, and useful citizens of the community.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By George Milburn  
Coweta, Oklahoma*

**I**N DEALING with the influence of highway transport upon the religious life of my community, I shall consider, first, the town in which I live; second, my personal observations; third, the experience of my parents; and fourth, the Sunday motorist.

The town in which I live is a typical Oklahoma village, and in it are found all those characteristics that are peculiar to communities formed in a state that is comparatively young. The men and women who founded my town did not come here for a better religious surrounding. They came to a wilderness. It was the lure of hidden fortunes, of sudden wealth, that drew them on and held them. Once here, resolute pioneers that they were, they set about to better things, to make homes. Blazed trails became dirt roads, and dirt roads in time became hard surfaced highways. And synonymous with thoughts of home and better things, came thoughts of religion. Churches were built.



I was born in the Indian Territory seventeen years ago. I have seen the automobile change from a novelty, a luxury, to a commodity, a necessity. I have known the time when paved avenues were not to be seen outside the larger towns. I remember sermons that condemned Sunday newspapers and buggy rides. Roads were dirt in those days. The livery stable was the village evil. After a Saturday shower or on a rainy Sunday, the hitching racks by the church were deserted. I have seen the accusing finger shifted from the horse and buggy to the auto; I have heard the first cries of protest against the better roads. I can mark the time when I first heard the word "joy-ride" flung from the pulpit.

After an investigation of church records in my community, I find that the average church and Sunday school attendance in every church except one is greater today than it ever has been before in the history of the town. This can not be attributed directly to the better highways, but taking as evidence the lines of cars parked near country churches during worship, in fair weather or bad, I can not but believe that they have had a powerful influence.

In the Sunday school which I attend, the highways have played an important part. Good roads have enabled us to get together with the Sunday schools of neighboring towns; to create a spirit of good fellowship that would not have been possible before.

When my parents came to Coweta there were no churches, and there were no roads that could have been called roads. That was twenty-three years ago. Since that time five churches have been built, two since autos became common, and the town has added a thousand to the population of five hundred which it then boasted. Since that time the roads have been made worthy of their name, and those that bear the greater part of the travel have been hard surfaced.

The habitual Sunday motorist is not a stranger to me. He is the one who runs the gamut of a "free-for-all" religious condemnation, — and drives again the next Sunday. It is he that, a decade ago, would have hitched his filly to his surrey for a drive into the country. He is the man who prefers the out-of-doors to churches. Were the roads hub deep with mud, it is probable that he would remain home and read the Sunday editions. Withal, "the groves were God's first temples," and with every journey through the woods, with every trip into the open spaces, whether he realizes it or not, he communes with Nature, God's art, and his soul profits by it.

The influence of highway transport upon the religious life of my community has been potent and profound; I am resolved that every evil feature that it may have is greatly over-balanced by the good that it has wrought.

# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Marjorie Mathews  
Portland, Oregon*

**M**Y COMMUNITY is an obscure little country settlement, connected with the rest of the world by means of highways. We have a prosperous, contented little village, even though many of its inhabitants are foreigners, some of whom do not yet speak comprehensible English. Many are people who have lived here since taking up their homesteads years ago.

The person who said, "The church is a great factor in the development of the roads," said it inversely in our case. Our improved highways brought us the church.

A few years ago, our roads were such that only the strong farm teams could be used on them. We had no durable surfaces—nothing but soft, deep mud in the winter, and stifling dust in the summer. Churches were things unknown, and Americans and foreigners alike led a haphazard—even a corrupt—life. The innocent little "overalled" boys and "ginghamed" girls took an active part in whatever happened—the rough fun, and the back-breaking toil.

Something happened about that time that opened the people's eyes to their need of a better means of communication. A child was drowned while fishing in the river with a group of youngsters. The lad's mother tried to get a pastor for the burial. The minister struggled all day with his carriage on the muddy road, was finally stopped in sight of our cemetery by the flooded ford, and was unable to let us know that he was there. This incident revealed our road problem, and our struggle for better roads began. We soon had the road to town in a serviceable condition by fixing it with planks, slabs, sawdust and gravel. Then our progress started.

In a short time, a minister came in, and he influenced us to build our little church. Occasionally at first, and often later on, ministers from other churches visited ours. We were always eagerly interested in their sermons, and it was through them, primarily, that we became associated with the outside. Our association with the outside gave our life a new interest and a new value.

Later our main road was gravelled and the little "mud-roads," leading to private homes, were improved. Child after child was induced to finish grammar school and go out for more education. Foreigner after foreigner searched out his neglected "first papers" and became naturalized. Soon the little church became the center of attraction. Neighbors, who often had not seen each other for months, visited after church every Sunday.

Now the whole community has a new spirit and a new purpose. Through our continued association with the outside and with our church, which could have in no way been possible but for the improved highways, we see life in a

new light. We are like the blind man who, opening his eyes at the touch of Christ, saw man's bigness—not his littleness. He saw life's sunshine—not its rain. Our case is the same. The people have become industrious, happy, and prosperous through the influence of the church, and the old life is being forgotten for the new. We have Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, Bible classes, and other organizations. Our schools are being consolidated, a high school is being erected, new people are moving in, and a Sunday school building is being made. As the bad affected the children, so the good is influencing them. They are learning to become good citizens and good Christians.

When one sees the line-up of cars, carriages, and wagons in front of the church on Sunday mornings, one realizes more fully the wonderful influence that highway transport has had on our little community.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By George Y. McClure  
Shamokin, Pennsylvania*

**A**MONG the hills of Central Pennsylvania, two thousand feet above sea level, lies a little village or patch, as these lowly hamlets are named in this region. Its only reason for existence is the great mining industry carried on in the surrounding anthracite coal fields.

Natalie, for such is the name of the patch, is but one of many similar communities scattered over the hillsides. Conditions, both religious and economical, are practically the same in most of these villages.

The mass of the population is composed of immigrants—Italians, Slavs, Irish, Scotch and Welsh. Thus many nationalities bring an assortment of customs and sects, some of which hold no good will toward others. To meet these varied spiritual needs some sort of religious provision is imperative. In the case of either Greek or Roman Catholics attendance at mass is compulsory, so we often find people walking miles through the hills over rocky paths to attend church—women with babes in arms, small children, whole families. Very frequently when they arrive it is necessary for them to go through the service standing, according to the European custom.

In most patches the congregations are small and too poor to provide adequate means of worship, so that morals naturally run slack, the more so since the religious ideal of the average alien miner is at no time very high, and isolation from church and the better influence of the outside world tends to lower all ideals considerably. No nation, town or even man can help growing morbid and degenerate if interest is wholly within.

Now in the case of the before mentioned community we have an exception. Natalie is exceptional in the fact that the controlling coal company has gone



to some pains to improve the life of the inhabitants. It is also exceptional in the fact that the village lies on the northern border of the Shamokin valley region. Below to the south thrives the hard coal industry, with colliery buildings and culm banks standing like statues among the low hills; to the north lies a fine farming district, where well-tilled fields and green pastures occupy the valleys. Natalie is connected, through the interest of the coal company and the enterprise of the citizens, with both north and south by good dirt roads. The resulting influences on the patch have been marked.

These roads were built and are kept in excellent condition by a Tax Payers' Association. Instead of the usual method of paying taxes to the township authorities the community has adopted the association system. With the help of the coal and iron companies all town affairs are run on an efficient basis so that a saving of about three hundred per cent in taxes, together with better road, lighting and water service, results.

After passable highways were constructed automobiles began to be in evidence. On Sunday people took their cars and attended church at the larger towns in the valley, for by road Natalie is less than an hour's ride from either Shamokin, Mt. Carmel, or Kulpmont.

With this reawakened religious interest came a demand for domestic social service. So a large well-equipped community-house was built. Like everything else the house was run on a sensible plan. Farmers from the north valley began to spend their evenings in Natalie, willingly walking even four miles to the mountain top now that the roads permitted. Almost every night when the weather is fair one finds the social center well occupied. Good clean entertainment is furnished for all nationalities and all religions, with the result that they learn to have a broader outlook and a better understanding of one another.

Natalie can well be termed a model mountain village. The people are contented, morally upright, and clean in their town life. Little trouble is had with strikes or walkouts. The disgraceful race brawls and stabbing affairs so common where the foreign element predominates are noticeably absent. The greatest, if not the only, reason for this, it may be said, has been the good influence of the outside world and the increased religious opportunities, both of which have been presented through highway transport, made possible by good roads.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Tomas Aponte  
Mayaguez, Porto Rico*

**R**ELIGION has ceased to be an economical drawback to a nation and instead has become one of its greatest assets. In olden times the establishment of a church or monastery meant a servile and totally dead life in the

surroundings. Now, where a church comes to life, thriving and hustling communities spring forth and progress naturally follows. But in order to further and fully prepare a place to be religiously fit, there should be facilities for reaching the place of worship.

My community, Mayaguez, with its fertile and vast fields is open to experiment in order to see what religion and good roads can do for a city. It is located in the western part of the Island of Porto Rico. Though it is a port there are practically no sandy tracts of land. The crops grown are so plentiful that most of them are lost before they can be taken from the field. The reason for that loss is to be found only in the poor means of transportation.

If good roads can help the products of the land, what can they not do for the peasants up in the hills, who merely exist, without the slightest knowledge of what real progress and religion mean?

Let us for a moment consider the lives of these poor people. Far from the city in a miserable hut where scarcely one human being could comfortably live, there are packed sometimes as many as ten or twelve people.

Men, women, children all live in the same room. They cannot be called immoral, for they know no better and cannot do any better either. The best one can say to this is what Jesus said, "Forgive them for they know not what they do." Can we account for this condition? We can trace it to the lack of facilities for building homes, and delving further into the problem we strike the root of the evil: the utter ignorance of religious matters among this poor people.

The age of miracles is past. The influence of those fearsome times lingers and hovers over the miserable and destitute people of our hills. Age-old superstition abounds, and the substitute of the rabbit's-foot, a horse-shoe, adorns the door of every hut. It is the duty of the pastor with his faith in Christ to correct this and bring these people to the light of truth.

How can religion accomplish this progress? By disseminating its ministers among the hills. They do it successfully and efficiently only by means of good highways. Religion is now economically related to life. The age of suffering under a merciless sun and drenching rain has to depart. A priest is human. So it is the duty of humanity to provide him with facilities and aid him in his charitable, divine work.

There are several places not very far from my town, which in reality prove to be as far from civilization as if they were in a lonely island in mid-ocean. In fact they are worse. I have visited two or three such places with extreme difficulty. In one of them there lived one hundred laborers with their families. A minister once visited there and although the owner of the land offered to build a chapel for him there, he had to refuse. It would seem that his action was not the best, but human resistance has a limit and this work would have

required more than the limit. And all for lack of highways. Lives, souls wasted for lack of a road!

But the proof of my argument is a palpable reality. There was a country village, destitute and miserable, about five or six miles from this city. A road, just a country road, was built. A church came to life. A school was founded. Around these two bulwarks of civilization houses began to spring forth. In these houses, homes were formed, and now it is growing fast with a standard of morality.

Blend together schools, churches, good roads, and as a result watch a town of progress, of limitless possibilities, come to being, the only miracle of the twentieth century!

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Helen Adams Ridgway  
Greene, Rhode Island*

**A**LTHOUGH the automobile, during the first quarter century of its development has, in some ways, had a harmful effect upon religious life, now things are beginning to be seen in their true proportion and the automobile is taking its proper place. The evil effects are merely temporary and when we consider the influence for good that the automobile and improved roads are having upon the advancement of religious interest, we have reason to be encouraged.

In my own community, a typical rural settlement of Southern New England, there is a marked contrast in the religious life and interest of those people who use state roads and those whose homes are upon unimproved country roads.

Consider, for instance, the church attendance of those living on our unimproved roads. Any special services must be planned for a bright night, because wagons and pedestrians have to come over the rough, rutted roads guided only by lantern light. Even automobile owners are unwilling to risk breaking the springs by dropping into ruts or holes which the dim lights do not reveal. These people cannot be depended upon to attend devotional services during the spring thaws or during the winter when their roads are almost impassable because of snow. Thus they lose the habit of regular church attendance, and they are liable not to take it up again even when conditions permit.

Those living on our good roads are differently situated. The smooth roads are easily seen even by lantern light. The autoist does not have to contend with ruts or mud holes, and the snow plow keeps the roads open.

From the pastor's viewpoint, the automobile has increased the field he can cover and has helped him better to organize his parish by enlisting the services



of those remote from the church. People living on the back roads whom the pastor can reach but seldom and who are unable to visit their neighbors become self-centered, cynical, and suspicious of each other. Then it is very hard for the pastor to help them or to secure their cooperation in religious work. Improved highways bring the people within easy touch of each other; teach them to work together and to understand each other better. At least this has been so in my community.

Both our pastor and people find that improved highway transport is very helpful in bringing them into closer contact with their metropolis, Providence. Motor buses now operating on our state highways make it possible for them to get away from home cares and perplexities, to mix with people in religious and social gatherings. Many never before able to attend rallies, conferences and conventions are now receiving much spiritual inspiration and encouragement by meeting with the larger religious organizations.

Then, too, the buses make it possible for our rural churches to obtain eminent religious speakers and church officials who are lecturing in the cities nearby. Their talks are very beneficial in that they tend to broaden the viewpoint of the people and to show them new ways of service.

There is also our state missionary work. As in the case of the pastor, our good roads allow the state missionary a larger radius. He can make the city his headquarters and from there work out in all directions. In that way he can somewhat link the religious life of the city with that of the country and lead the people to be mutually helpful.

There are other ways in which facility of transportation influences the religious life of my community. The rural teacher, especially, exerts a great moral and religious influence over his pupils and the better transport offered to the teacher, the finer type of teacher we may command.

Furthermore, since highway conditions have improved, community and church have been strengthened and uplifted by the influx of new desirable families and the return of families who had moved away.

Thus from observations in my own community, I conclude that highway transport and improved roads increase church attendance; enlarge the area and strengthen the organization of pastoral work; facilitate missionary work from large centers; provide greater attractions in church services; bringing rural residents, formerly isolated, into closer contact with each other and with inspirational forces in the larger world; and make for a richer, broader individual life.

# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Virginia Doar  
Georgetown, South Carolina*

**I**N THE early history of the church of Prince George Winyah, for many years the inhabitants of the parish were without a rector to conduct public worship, baptize their children, or to bury their dead in any Christian form.

At that time there was a minister stationed at Prince Frederick Church, only twelve miles from Prince George Church. But the minister was unable to make his way over heavy sand trails, marsh and mire, to cross a wide, deep river and make a visit to the poor thirsting souls who were in dire need of him. These poor creatures lived and died without the church privileges which every person should enjoy.

Two hundred years have passed since that disastrous time and salvation has been brought to men of this parish by means of a system of good roads, which has been established throughout the county. By means of an automobile, a minister can go from Prince George Church to Prince Frederick Church in twenty minutes.

For two years the rector of Prince George Church gave the living message of the Gospel to his congregation in the morning and at night was in a town about twenty miles way, preaching. He was able to accomplish this only on account of the splendid national highway which has been made between the two towns.

It can be safely said that most of the missionary work of today is done by means of automobiles over good roads. Ministers are able to preach once a month in churches where they formerly held services about three times a year, because the roads, which were once almost impassable, are now in good condition.

The wonderful work which Billy Sunday and Gypsie Smith have done could never have been accomplished without the aid of good roads and automobiles. People who never would have heard the voices of these men, had they been dependent on trains, have come from all over the country in automobiles over good roads.

In country places the church is the center of the community; in many cases it is the only place the people have to go. If it is expensive to get to church the people cannot attend services. Sometime ago a country woman said that although the train which stopped near her house ran within a block of the church, she could not go, because there were six children to take with her. Today that woman, her husband and her six children attend church at very little cost, going in an automobile over a national highway.

A man who lived thirty miles in the country lay dying. He was anxious to receive the Holy Communion before he departed this life, so his wife telephoned for the minister. In about half hour the minister was with him. But for a good road, the minister might have been too late.

Country parishes, which were once flourishing in the days when a community was built about them, but have been dormant, are now being built up again, and will grow into healthy churches, because the people can more readily get to them.

After carefully studying the road system of our community, I find that there is no one thing that is building up our great Nation so much as the highway, for it is an important factor in civilization, education and religion. Since these three go hand in hand, I can readily see the influence of good roads throughout our country.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Josephine Deyo  
Elk Point, South Dakota*

THE economic, social, educational, spiritual, and moral status of rural life is largely dependent on roads. Roads throughout time have limited the progress of a people and determined their thought. Of what does it avail to strive for a prosperous church when the roads are practically impassable? There can be no progressive civilization without religious principles as its foundation.

Elk Point is a farming community, with its prosperity directly dependent on the prosperity of the surrounding farmers. At the time of the first settlements, the roads were mere trails and the transporting vehicles, ox-wagons. With the growth of the town came the establishment of churches. The trails became roads and the vehicles, carriages. The people were thus enabled to attend church as regularly as the weather, with its ravaging effect upon roads, permitted.

The possibility that the conditions, caused by poor roads, did not need to exist, did not occur to the early settlers. Patiently waiting for the roads to get better, they exhibited the same resignation of spirit as when bearing any other affliction usually ascribed to the acts of God.

Modern transportation is the winged heel of Perseus, overcoming the lack of intercourse which has retarded the progress of earlier periods; and the church is the mirror in which is reflected the influence of roads on religion.

The automobile came with improved roads, and, also, served to usher them in. The utilization of this vehicle is doing much to secure the participation of



farmers' families in the joys of religious recreation and work. It has been one of the most successful missionaries for adequate highways. It has been greeted as the deliverance of the farmer.

At present, there is no final measure of the religious benefits accruing to the community by the establishment of good roads. So intimately are highways connected with every aspect of community life that any method devised to measure their benefits is incomplete.

Elk Point, being located in an agricultural region, is very intimately related to the surrounding country; hence, has many possibilities as a center for community life. It is a church center as well as a business center. In order to have the best organization of life in the community, the town-people and country-people must cooperate. In no other place is this better accomplished than in the church where all meet on an equal footing. It is in the church that people confer and exchange ideas. This is not possible except when the roads allow the people to get together.

Religious activities here need all the encouragement that can reasonably be given. The unnecessary sub-division of the church into numerous small congregations throughout the country, because poor roads prevent traveling some distance to a large central church, operates to weaken the attendance. Therefore, the concentration of church funds and attendance are dependent upon improvement in the road conditions.

The rise in land values, the building of more and better schools, the reduction in cost of living, and increase in farm income are benefits which are gradually becoming known as the influence of improved roads is making itself felt in the community. Each of these either has had or is having its influence on the religious life through increased financial support, and through the betterment of the moral character of the people.

Proof of great religious inclination here may be found in the fact, that, out of the seven existing churches, two, both magnificent structures, have been completed since the recent improvement of the roads.

We are a church-going nation; and yet we have traveled with only the speed of a snail to the idea of better roads over which to go to church. The famous Appian way helped to prepare the world for Christ's ministry here on earth. Would not the improvement of roads, at the present time, help to spread religious sentiment?

Good roads shorten distance, broaden the conception of life, increase prosperity, advance education, increase religious activities, and promote health and happiness. For unity in its every phase; for liberty in the best and most wholesome meaning of the word; for religion in its highest sense, the importance of adequate highways, must, and will eventually, be considered by all.

# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Evelyn Thrall  
Knoxville, Tennessee*

Roads to the right of us,  
Roads to the left of us,  
But never a road to the front of us.

**S**UCH was the predicament in which my pal and I found ourselves one June morning in the Great Smokies. After traveling by horseback over miles and miles of so-called roads, we arrived at the little village of Talequah.

The thing that impressed us most was a deserted, weather-beaten church in an extremely run-down condition. The mountaineers told us this story. For years the little church had struggled on, making no progress. A circuit rider came to them for one service every month when it was possible to get over the mountains. Frequently his trip was impossible, so the mountaineers had to be satisfied with several services a year.

This was the best they could do, however, since they had no means of marketing their produce, and had no income beyond what they needed to eke out a bare existence. Even the roads they had were so poor and almost impassable for the greater part of the year, that it was impossible to haul their produce only a short distance of thirty miles to the nearest city. Consequently they had to give up the circuit rider entirely since they could not raise their portion of his salary. For eight or ten months the church had been dead. There was no community center but the store. Each family lived and worked for itself without thought for the community. This condition in the little village, surrounded by all the beauties of nature which should turn the mind to higher things, haunted us. We resolved to make an effort to get the state to build at least passable roads.

After five years we were able to show the state highway inspector a new village. It had been one continuous struggle for the first two years until we had a good highway, after which things moved on of their own accord.

The church was still there, but what a change! The building was repaired and remodeled. There was a hitching yard for horse-drawn vehicles and a parking space for automobiles, as a number of families had already purchased them. The secret of the transformation was found in the improved highway. This enabled the people to market their produce, so with increased incomes they were able to secure a better preacher. It now required only two hours to deliver produce to Knoxville, the nearest market. This fact not only helped to increase the incomes of the people already in the community, but it attracted several new families.

A young man who had been trained in rural church work and community

leadership was appointed pastor. Instead of being put over a large circuit of several churches, his entire time was given to this church and one other on the same improved highway. This enabled them to have one church service every Sunday and the benefit of the trained pastor's leadership in the Sunday school. Church membership was increased by his work and by the fact that people were able to come greater distances over the improved road. Classes in religious education were organized. The church became the community center. The recreations of the community were organized under the direct supervision of the pastor. He found time to visit in the homes of the people and to encourage religious life in the home. He visited as far up in the mountains as the improved highway extended and gathered the people together for religious, social and other activities. The pastor organized a Country Life Club with the following objectives: The development of the literary and musical talents of the community, home beautifying, rural economics and the cultivation of the social and moral life of the people. An orchestra and a choir were organized which increased the interest in all church services. Almost everyone in the neighborhood was soon identified in some way with the religious life of the community.

Many people reached by this club became active in religious work. The church became the inspiration to spiritual life and the real community force.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Lollie Virginia Van Wert  
Marshall, Texas*

THERE was a time when Harrison County, located among the hills of East Texas, was far-famed for its bad roads. Older citizens recall the time when for two hundred and fifty miles west, the wagon trains of commerce passed over its soil, going to and from Shreveport and Jefferson. Crossing over Harrison County was hard going.

So, too, with travel. The vehicles then were the old-time four-in-hand stage-coaches. When the roads were dry, they tumbled along up and down steep hills, over ground-boulders, and through sand-beds at the rate of four to six miles per hour, making half that time in bad weather.

It took General Sam Houston, in his panther skin vest and sombrero hat, a week to go by stage from Austin to Marshall, travelling day and night. He could "flivver" it now in two days and sleep at night.

Those were the days of scattered churches and preachers. The circuit riders were the religious pioneers and they experienced many difficulties in getting to their appointments. They usually rode ponies, with a pair of long slick saddle-bags astride, but sometimes they had to foot it. Their flocks came mostly in wagonloads.



From October until May the roads were in a deplorable condition. In many places the bright red sticky mud was over the hubs of the vehicles. To walk or ride during inclement weather was a hardship and the congregation dwindled to a mere handful. The preacher often wondered, as he pulled along through the mud and slush, if there would be any one to hear his message when he arrived at the meeting-house. The faithful few who braved the elements often had the same misgivings while waiting for their pastor to arrive. These conditions were very discouraging and the result was that many grew indifferent as to their attendance at Divine services. They got along with bad roads then because they did not know any better.

Two new things have come to Harrison County—good roads and the automobile—and they are remaking it.

Ten years ago it was hard to find a good roads' enthusiast, but today a man who claims that good roads are an unnecessary expense is considered an undesirable citizen.

Harrison County stands in the first rank in road building. Its first good roads were built in 1914 and at the present time \$2,000,000 have been spent for that purpose, with about \$300,000 additional now available. Harrison County is divided into four equal parts by coast-to-coast highways; and good roads, totaling one hundred and three miles, extend to the county line in every direction. The creeks and streams have been bridged with permanent structures of steel and concrete. The most notable ones are the bridge over Sabine river, erected at a cost of \$16,000, and the bridge over Cypress Bayou which cost \$2,400.

The various denominations are no longer subdivided into small churches scattered throughout the county. They have concentrated their funds and each denomination now has an attractive church in each section of the county where well-attended services are held every Sunday.

The people often get together in a social way to raise funds for religious purposes. Our Y. M. C. A. secretary sometimes attends these socials and takes the high school band with him to help with the entertainment.

Numerous families from the rural districts now occupy pews in Marshall churches. Every Sunday the Presbyterian church sends out a truck with a sign on each side reading, "Presbyterian Sunday School." It brings in about thirty-five children from the Grover community, then makes a tour of the city, stopping on signal for any child along the route. This truck service has resulted in a great increase in attendance.

Two great religious revivals of especial interest, the Noonday and Scottsville camp-meetings, are held in Harrison County annually. Before the day of good roads, few, save those having leisure to camp at these places, were privileged to enjoy the services; but today hundreds of automobiles make daily trips carrying crowds of people to these assemblies.

When it is considered that increased attendance at religious services promotes Christian citizenship, it may well be concluded that highway transport is an important and essential factor in the religious life of my community.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By David Trevithick  
Heber City, Utah*

NEAR the central part of Utah where the crags of the Rocky Mountains rear their heads is Mt. Timpanogas. On its jagged contour there is chiseled against the western sky the striking image of an Indian face. The Red Men held the Face in reverence because they believed its stoic features gazing constantly down upon their Paradise Valley, reflected pleasure or pain according to their actions.

When the Indians were forced to resign possession of the valley to white settlers, they confided the legend of the Stone Face. But the new comers were a hardy lot and what religion they had was not of the "graven image" type. However, they accepted the Indian lore along with the Valley. But the Face could not exert over them the refining influence it had held over the Red Men.

The white settlers grew and prospered but being cut off from the outside world because of lack of passable roads, they began to drift like their herds. They were not inherently bad; but, without restraint, they fell into ways not in keeping with the teachings of Christianity. They felt that Sundays were particularly valuable for branding calves and breaking colts. The youngsters groomed their favorite ponies for the weekly Sunday races.

The one church at the county seat was separated from the settlers in the north end of the valley by a long lane winding over boggy lowlands. But so long as stock could be driven over it, and the necessary supplies obtained, no one thought of building a road just to get to church. This isolation gave rise to petty jealousies until the two communities were blinded with prejudices.

One day a change came. The Governor, while resting in his mountain retreat, grasped the cause of their trouble and saw, as well, the possibilities of the locality. Good roads would bridge this lack of unity, and would bring not only peace, but prosperity. Eastward a transcontinental highway was diverting enormous traffic from the State. He pointed out that if a road could be built through Antelope canyon and across their valley it would connect them with the State Capitol and bring this traffic their way.

The economic value of the project appealed to the people. A committee, appointed by them, succeeded in getting both State and Federal aid and

within eighteen months this new link in a transcontinental highway had been constructed. The town square became a tent city of tourists who, after long travel over prairie and desert sand, were content to loll in this haven of rest. Sundays found the little church on the same square crowded beyond capacity by these strangers. Their presence brought out many of the native residents who, at first, were moved by a spirit of curiosity. This intermingling of strangers with new ideas enticed people from all over the county until the little church became a melting pot where former local misunderstandings and friction were merged into the dawn of a new era.

Now the old order of things in Paradise Valley has gone. Awakened civic pride and a spirit of harmony is manifest in the magnificent new church. The covering of the bogs and the crowning of the church steeple have united the people. Neighborly charity prevails and no one need remain away from church for want of a ride. If cleanliness be next to godliness, the community has moved upward in this respect. Back yards are cleaner and front yards more beautiful since good roads and many automobiles have brought homes into constant public gaze. The smell of burning hair at the branding corral on Sunday and the clatter of horses feet in the race have given way to the purring of automobiles as they come from remote parts of the county over good roads to take their place in the parked spaces around the church. The road building program has even included the building of a scenic route far up the mountain side toward the Great Face. Who, then, will say that the legend of the simple Red Men is not genuine, and that the chiseled features of their sacred Stone Face is not smiling down on "the highways on which one goeth up to the House of God."

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By John Detore  
Winooski, Vermont*

ON A RAINY Sunday morning, in Chester, four years ago, one could see coming down the road a team with its wagon wheels about six inches in the slush. The old horse was doing his best to pull through, and the driver was urging him on. Behind him, others could be seen in the same condition, all trying to reach either of the two churches, situated on two low hills facing each other.

Chester, having the only houses of worship for many miles around, and being located in the farming district, was sorely in need of a good road, to enable the people to reach the churches more safely and quickly.

The churches were not enjoying the membership which they should have and were gradually losing more, and its influence on the community life was



less felt than before, caused in a large part by the bad, uneven road, which, when it rained, made it slushy and muddy, and caused many people, especially those living at a distance, to fall into a state of religious lethargy.

Fortunately for Chester's social, commercial and religious position, this grave problem was solved by the State Automobile Association which offered to build a road from Franklin to Milton, connecting the Eastern and Western sections of the state, if the three towns would each bear one-fourth of the expense. The offer was gladly accepted and the cement road construction immediately began.

In place of furrows of mud there appeared a level stretch of cement road connecting the three villages. It was a great relief for those who had been accustomed to the former condition to ride without fear of bumps or of suddenly dropping six inches into a mud hole.

The people who had been lax in attending to their religious duties were now encouraged by the new road. Instead of coming in strong, rough, heavy wagons, they now ride in automobiles. Not one or two members but the entire family goes to church with the exception of one, who remains at home until the others return, when she takes her turn. This is made possible by the new highway, as it formerly required some people living at a distance two hours to make the trip. At present it takes them about half an hour.

A month after the laying of the road, the minister announced to the congregation that on the following Sunday there would be a revival, and every one who could possibly do so was expected to be present. The result was that from early Sunday morning until late in the afternoon there was a continuous procession of automobiles, carriages and other vehicles, all headed for Chester.

Never in its history had Chester been honored by so many people at one time. A stranger might think that the weather, on this warm, pleasant August day, accounted for the large number of people, but had it not been for the hard, level road on which to drive they would have remained away as formerly.

At the gathering on the hill, every one was enthusiastic, the moral effect was wonderful. The church once more is a social center where the general topics of the day, the progress of crops, the weather and other matters are discussed, under the guidance of a spiritual and practical leadership.

Incidentally, the new road was beneficial to Chester in other ways. Formerly trucks from Milton or Franklin would make the detour rather than traverse the muddy uneven road; also farm products were delivered to market quicker and at less expense. The general prosperity, increasing population and an enlarging parish caused the minister to seriously consider building a new church.

Now in place of an old wooden structure one sees a large, stone building with wide steps leading to the entrance and before it a well kept lawn, sloping

down to the road. In three years Chester has become the religious center of the surrounding country and the Bishop has decided to make his residence there as soon as his home is completed.

Merry picnic parties are held on Sundays, when the weather permits, conducted by the minister and deacon, the latter here and there to see that all is run in order, and that every one is enjoying himself or herself, who could not but do so under such wholesome influence, brought about only by the building of that long, white streak of road, bordered by the green fields.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Ellen Douglas Gordon  
Richmond, Virginia*

FROM the belfry of Midlothian Chapel one may gaze far over the countryside. Old Sexton Tinsley used to climb to the tower and sit peering idly up and down the turnpike. "Now," he would mutter, with the thick rope in his hand, "I'll jest set here till a couple o'cyars goes by."

But often he could not wait, so long were the "cyars" in appearing, for rains make the roads heavy, and it rains now and then everywhere—even in Virginia. However, there were seven family carriages, drawn by seven family horses, that pulled up at the door each Sabbath afternoon. Tinsley pitied the family horses on slippery days. He pitied those, too, who must walk through the mud to Sunday school. How humiliated, how unhappy, how disagreeable they were when they arrived besmeared and bespattered!

Then he would ring the bell. Echoes from the shallow hills floated back to him—echoes, that was all. He would shudder and go downstairs where the people were assembled, chatting of affairs in general, since this was their only chance to be together. The minister had not come. They knew he would be late; he always was, after showers, for he would conduct two other services earlier in the day at his two other churches, and the highway was not to be hurried over. The congregation had found that out when they had hired a bus at their own expense to carry the children back and forth. It had turned over once; two little boys had been killed. After that everybody was afraid and would keep the little ones at home.

Seven years have passed down Midlothian turnpike—seven years that in their trail have left a highway strong and shining. The state at last has opened her prison doors, through which the convicts may pass into a life of usefulness. They have built the macadam road and are rejoicing in the return of self-confidence. The work is a memorial to their labor, to the dawning of a new sense of service.

The church has a large addition on either side. Before it stands a bus from which are leaping forty-five, forty-six, forty-seven radiant little children. Just around a curve in the highway a second bus is bearing forty-seven more. Hundreds of grown-ups are crowding into the chapel where the minister welcomes every one with a hearty handshake or a pleasant work.

He is never late now; this is his only church. Yet all the old friends are here, for, since the means of transportation improved, there has been a consolidation of district chapels, a concentration of energies. Thus finances also have increased so that the pastor receives a larger, sufficient salary. He can afford an automobile, in which on week days he visits his scattered flock, cheers the sick, comforts the bereft, strengthens the weak, and befriends the needy. He can invite new acquaintances to enter his fold—new acquaintances who now conveniently leave the dirty city for the wholesome, lifegiving, uplifting atmosphere of the out-of-doors. With what pride he notes the neatly trimmed lawns, the freshly painted houses, the changes in the morality, the sociability, the democracy of the people! These are the thoughts that gleam in his eyes as he walks up the aisle to begin the service.

A breeze brings in a whiff of springtime through the window; a row of sunbeams dance across the altar. The minister believes it is the Father's blessing. Joyously he faces the throng before him—a throng that responds with unanimity and delight to the summons from the belfry. "Friends," the sermon closes, "nineteen hundred years ago the Romans built a road that stands today, though Rome has deteriorated and fallen. This is because her religion was without foundation and her morals corrupt. Our church now is established firmly; our roads are like the roads of Rome. And as long as our highways inspire the people to worship, as long as our thoroughfares lead to the temples of God, America shall tower in splendor to glorify her Maker and her world."

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Wilma Lambert  
Bellingham, Washington*

THE community in which I live is very progressive. The county numbers only about fifty thousand inhabitants, and yet within its limits are about six hundred miles of splendid highway. One hundred and thirty miles are permanently paved. Over 8,000 automobile licenses were issued from the county auditor's office during 1922. In such a community it should be easy to judge what influence all this has on our religious life.

One Sunday morning recently I counted 110 autos parked near the Methodist church; almost sixty were waiting near the Presbyterian, three blocks away. These automobiles had brought about 170 families to those two churches that morning. Beside this mute evidence there is the word of the pastor of the



largest of the fifty-two churches of this city. He says that among the 1,100 members of the church there are fifty families who come regularly from outlying districts. He says that many of these families live so far from any church that it would be impossible for them to attend services if they did not have a comfortable and rapid way of traveling. By this means they are enabled to place their children in a graded and departmental Sunday school where they receive the most thorough Bible instruction.

Although the country people now have access to the finest churches in the city, many prefer the country church. Just as highway transport has helped to bring about consolidated school districts, so it has enabled scattered country folk to meet for worship at a common church center.

In countless ways the auto serves pastors and home missionaries. Within the last few years a preacher's range of service has been greatly increased. In past times his influence rarely extended beyond the bounds of his own parish. Seldom did he preach in another church or visit in nearby districts. Now with his motor car he can repeat his sermon in two or more different churches on the same Sunday. Thus his charges for each are somewhat less than of old—and the village churches can secure an able preacher at small expense.

One of the most loved and respected ministers of this city frequently visits the inmates of the county home and hospitals, carrying words of good cheer. Several of our churches conduct services in such places, since the auto has made them easy of access.

This city affords a splendid view of the harbor and mountains and because of this, as well as our famous driveways and beautiful parks, where the trees are green the year round, it is rapidly becoming a tourist center. Sometimes the argument is advanced that the automobiles draw people away from the Sunday services. This is not borne out by the experience of one pastor in this city, who says that so many tourists, temporarily camping in our parks, attend his church during the summer months, that instead of cutting down the services during the summer, as was formerly the custom, special programs are arranged for them.

It should be borne in mind that not all of religion is church-going. More of uplift might come to the tired city-dweller through contact with nature. Who could catch the fragrance or gaze upon the riot of color of our wonderful bulb gardens without feeling like J. G. Holland that "flowers are the sweetest thoughts of God?" Who can lie on the pine needles beneath the trees and gaze up through the interlacing boughs without being inspired to worship, as Joyce Kilmer was, when he exclaimed,

"Poems are made by fools like me,  
But only God can make a tree!"

After all, were not the groves "God's first temples"?

# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Helen Lewis  
Lewisburg, West Virginia*

UP AMONG the Allegheny Mountains, in the center of the ridge-rimmed valley of the Greenbrier river, is the rural community that has always been my home. The religious life of this community centers around Clifton Church, and this church is an excellent example of the influence of roads on the religious life of a community. Within five years, since the coming of the hard-surfaced road, Clifton has gained in influence, attendance, wealth, and territory.

Before the roads of the county were hard-surfaced they were no better than clay roads in a mountainous country are apt to be. That means almost impassable for several months out of the year. As a result the meetings of the Sunday school and other organizations were poorly attended during the muddy season and often were discontinued altogether. Clifton and another church shared a minister's time half and half, so we had church services on Sunday mornings only once in two weeks. There was a spirit of friendliness to the church in the neighborhood but the bad roads prohibited more frequent meetings. It was very hard for the minister to cover his large pastoral field. And naturally interest lagged.

After the roads were improved Clifton Church woke up. All the religious and social meetings of the church are well attended the year round; for bad weather does not keep the people at home so long as the roads are good enough for automobiles to be used. With the increased attendance interest in all religious matters increased; and with the interest the income of the church grew. A manse has been built and a pastor secured for his whole time. The church building has been enlarged and improved.

Another factor in producing this larger church income was the greater prosperity of the section. For instance, many of the farmers have taken up dairying and have found that it pays much better than the general farming they were doing. But dairying was impossible with unimproved highways, because the milk had to be taken a number of miles to town.

This prosperity has brought the church another boon quite as great as bigger financial receipts. It is enabling the people to give their children a more liberal education. These children will be leaders in a few years, and nothing is more essential to the religious life of a community than trained leaders.

Besides these improvements, there is the territorial gain—the outpost work. Clifton has two mission fields. Fifteen years ago these places were unproductive of anything but children. Children there were in great numbers, and

much ignorance and poverty. Under the influence of Clifton mission workers both of these fields have been developed, but one has far outstripped the other. This section has the better roads and a mail route. There is a third field, less advanced than the other two, which is asking Clifton for a Sunday school. Only one obstacle stands in the way—the roads are impassable except on horseback.

Behind these Clifton mission fields rises the Greenbrier Mountain where life is far more miserable. The county nurse has found people there who have never seen a church or schoolhouse or heard a note of music! And yet within six miles of these places, at the very foot of the mountain, is White Sulphur Springs, the play ground of wealth and culture. The churches and community workers are anxious to help the mountain people, but they can hardly reach them by the steep paths that the barefooted mountaineers travel, and it is hard to carry new life to a community by mule back. Yet these degenerate people were originally of quite as good descent as most of us in the valley on our side of the mountain, or as the people at White Sulphur on the other. If we had been shut off from the world for generations would we be better than they? How much of our civilization do we owe to roads?

Unless these sections of Greenbrier County are exceptional—and there is every reason to believe that they are not—highway transport plays a large part in the religious life of a community.

## The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Richard Pettingill  
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin*

THERE is probably no community in the Middle West that has been more influenced in its religious life by good roads than Fond du Lac. But, unfortunately, this influence is not wholly for good; in fact, it is almost as powerful a force for evil.

No one can deny that in the course of the last few years the general moral tone of certain classes of Fond du Lac's population has steadily sunk lower and lower. The blame rests to a great extent on the isolated roadhouses which surround Fond du Lac on every side, on the practice of holding wild parties out in the country, and on the joy rides so freely indulged in nowadays. It is indeed regrettable that such a necessity as good roads should bring with it such great evils. And what is even more deplorable, it is the young people, who ought to be awakening to the true meaning of religion, who are indulging in these activities.

There is a second class of people in Fond du Lac that one sees in increasing numbers every year. The well-to-do citizen who, before he purchased his car,



was at least a fairly regular attendant at church services, now spends his entire Sunday morning washing his car in preparation for the afternoon ride. This in itself is not so harmful; but soon it becomes a habit to stay away from church, and then it is not long before God also is neglected.

But, fortunately the good outweighs the evil. While a relatively small number of city dwellers have been tempted by the luxury of modern highway transportation to neglect the church, a vast number of rural citizens have seized the opportunity to secure the advantages of urban church life. Families that in the past struggled to attend a poorly equipped, poorly attended service every Sunday, now not only attend a more populous church and listen to a far better sermon, but also engage in other church activities which they had never dreamed of before.

The fifteen main highways that lead into Fond du Lac render it an easy matter for the farmer to drive to religious services. The astounding thing about it is that while the membership and attendance at the neighboring rural churches have not fallen off in the least, the city churches have secured hundreds of new members who live in the country. A recent survey of Fond du Lac churches reveals the fact that between ten and fifteen per cent of all the church people of Fond du Lac live in the country. This increase in the proportion of rural members can not be accounted for by saying that it is caused by the natural increase in population, for the rural population of Fond du Lac county has not increased to an appreciable extent at all. The only explanation is that better transportation facilities have made it possible for rural and suburban dwellers to reach church more easily than in the past.

Prominent local ministers have stated that the effect of their sermons is directly proportionate to the frame of mind the listener is in. Is the proper receptive frame of mind to be secured by first plowing through oceans of mud, or else through clouds of dust on the way to church? Certainly not! Such a trip is much more likely to prevent the isolated farmer coming at all.

Increased church attendance is not the only religious benefit Fond du Lac receives from good roads, although it is the most important. Improved highway transportation facilities have helped the various pastors to personally look after the welfare of their congregations. It is impossible for a minister to properly attend to his duty unless he can get around readily. Then good roads have brought both the city and the country dweller into a closer understanding with God by giving him the chance to see and to love the beauties of nature. As Coleridge says:

"He prayeth best, who loveth best,  
All things both great and small;  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all."

Such is the influence of the highways on the religious life of Fond du Lac; it is partly evil, partly good. But by how much the good outweighs the evil!

# The Influence of Highway Transport Upon the Religious Life of My Community

*By Jack Finegan  
Torrington, Wyoming*

RELIGION is one of the geatest needs of the community and of the world today. And why is religion our greatest necessity? Why should the religious life of the community be developed?

Primarily by bettering the moral tone and teaching friendship and mutual help it makes the community a more desirable place in which to live, and brings to such a community many citizens who wish their children to grow up in an environment where Christian ideals exert a lasting influence on them. When we review the lives of many of our great men and understand the forces that have developed their characters, we shall pay tribute not only to some of our splendid universities but first of all to the Sunday school and church where their early training was received.

And through helping the community, religion helps the world; for as President Grant has said, "To the influence of the Bible we are indebted for the progress made in true civilization." It has been the experience of all nations as recorded by history, that when they followed the teachings of Christianity they prospered; when they neglected their religion their downfall became assured. Nations do not become civilized until they are christianized. India is an example of this. Russia, where the Soviet leaders mock all religion, is rapidly retrogressing.

Now let us consider the influence of highway transport upon the religious life of my community. In this particular locality of our great western country, where we go miles to the city man's blocks, we find many homesteads, farms and an occasional ranch twenty to forty miles from a town. Before the coming of good roads, families living in these isolated spots were practically unable to attend church and it was equally difficult for a minister to go to them. At the present time good roads not only make it possible for them to come long distances to attend religious services, but these splendid highways are a real benefit to the minister, enabling him to visit his country parishioners and hold services in these outlying districts. A recent editorial mentioned the fact that highways and good roads are of inestimable value to the doctor in our rural communities. Their value to our ministers is even greater, for the saving of souls is more important than the healing of the body.

Here in my town one of our pastors holds his regular services on Sunday morning and Sunday evening, and during the afternoon drives out fifteen miles to another town to preach there; another drives to a town sixty miles away to hold services in that community each alternate Sunday. Meetings too are frequently held in the small country schoolhouses, in this way reaching

many who would otherwise be totally without the influence of the church. All these things have become possible only since the good roads movement was started.

With our splendid system of highways, it is true the tired business men of the town may at times be tempted to go for a ride instead of attending religious services on Sunday, the smooth roads alluring with visions of a rapid spin to cool woods and rushing trout streams. But the joy-riders invariably seek the beauty spots of the surrounding country. And as "The groves were God's first temple," who knows but that they find "Books in the running brooks, sermons in stones and good in everything"? In fact, my own Sunday school has taken several trips to the shady river bank to hold our morning sessions there, and has found this to be an inspiration.

In this state an immense amount of work is being done in constructing new highways and maintaining and improving old ones. The result of this is a vast network of roads, with two state highways passing through my town. With the National, state and county governments cooperating in this work, thus benefiting our people by furnishing employment and spending great sums within the state, we have a more prosperous and contented community; and seeing and realizing the blessings of living in a Christian nation, a nation with the welfare of its citizens at heart, our residents become more responsive to the teachings of religion.



Winner and Winning Essay in National Good Roads Essay  
Contest for 1920

“Ship by Truck and Good Roads”

By Katharine F. Butterfield  
Weiser, Idaho



Miss Katharine F. Butterfield of Weiser, Idaho, winner of the first annual Harvey S. Firestone Scholarship in 1920. Miss Butterfield was a senior in High School, aged 16 years, when she won the National Essay Contest. She is now in her senior year at Northwestern University, Evanston, Ills.

LIKE curious children, the Indians of the plains watched the building of the first transcontinental railroad. When the first engine breathing smoke and flame steamed down upon them, they turned their ponies' heads and fled wildly, expecting to feel, at every jump, its hot breath on their cheeks. But the monster never pursued them over the trackless prairies. It had its limitations then. It has them now.

A more mobile kinsman of the locomotive demonstrates ability to travel without steel rails, the tractable truck. On the farm it is shortening the distance to market, carrying twice the load in half the time and eating only while it works.

Freight traffic everywhere is clogged. The present condition is choking industry—a menace financial and otherwise to the whole country. Every year to some extent,

freight congestion recurs. The railroads have no competitors for the long haul, which justifies the short haul at each end. Shall they compete for the short haul, or advise the segregation of short haul traffic, and invoke the aid of this “rural express” for the hundred mile runs? Railroads cut through community areas a single diameter. Truck highways spread out innumerable radii.

Trucks carry blooded stock to range flocks.

In due time fleets of trucks are convoyed, bringing in the wool, transferring it for its long haul to the Atlantic seaboard. Railroads again return it to us as manufactured goods and the cycle is complete. Bursting granaries spell prosperity for the railroads—a long haul to the sea. To insure a hundred per cent harvest, fullest benefit from short planting seasons, let the truck carry the seed wheat, farm machinery, fuel, replacements and repairs for the short haul. Long and short haul agencies supplement each other. The long arc and the short arc dovetail, and the transportation circle is complete. They coalesce, not conflict.

"Within a mile of Edinboro town," there runs an old Roman road. The sightseers' bus travels over the same highway that re-echoed to the tread of Roman soldiery. The work of human hands two thousand years ago is an instrument of human progress today! The cost of such highways, distributed over centuries, fades into insignificance. Nevertheless it takes something besides the enthusiasm and energy of a pseudo-efficiency expert to build good roads. A good road program can not be clapped down upon a community like a nicely fluted pie crust, presenting an attractive surface. Every dollar's worth of bonds must show a dollar's worth of permanent improvement. Posterity will help pay for the roads; we must insure value received. Millions have been spent by corporations to improve railroads, millions will be spent by co-operation to build good roads.

The agencies of transportation may be likened to the circulation of the blood. No matter what bright arterial blood the heart, the *trunk* line pumps, unless the capillaries, the *truck* lines, carry it to the finger tips.

To the Motor Truck, the highest exponent of good roads! To Good Roads, the basis for Truck Efficiency!

Winner and Winning Essay in National Good Roads Essay  
Contest for 1921

“Good Roads and Highway Transport”

By Garland Johnson  
*Bridgeport, West Virginia*



Miss Garland Johnson, of Bridgeport, West Virginia, who was 15 years old and in her sophomore year in High School when she won the Harvey S. Firestone University Scholarship for 1921. She is now attending the University of West Virginia.

THIS morning the clank of chains and tramp of horses' hoofs called me to the window where the road scraper was smoothing the highway before the house. This afternoon a sudden rain storm undid the work leaving struggling motor cars ploughing axle deep in clayey West Virginia mud. Last March the upkeep of the dirt roads in the county cost \$22,000, besides which the muddy roads caused expensive damages and delays. This is the "mud tax" which every one must pay directly or indirectly. Permanent highways will mean higher taxes but they will be more than repaid by increased real estate values and lowered transportation costs.

The invention of the railroad during the early development of this country made it possible for the nation to spread over vast territories in a few decades. A historian tells us that twelve thousand wagons passed between Pittsburg, Philadelphia and Baltimore in 1817. This would make a week's traffic over the Pennsylvania Railroad now. The railroad situation is a vital problem today for when transportation breaks down civilization cannot stand. The country's needs have outgrown the railroads and the motor truck on permanent highways seems to be the solution for our transportation problem.

The agricultural population of a country is the foundation of its prosperity. The influx of population to our cities is the most characteristic movement of today and is largely caused by the isolation of farm life. Good roads and the family car give the farmer's family social advantages and make possible a consolidated school and central church for the farm district.

The problem of the "High cost of living" is largely a distribution problem. Transportation takes toll from every consumer. With hard surface roads a team or truck can pull ten times as great a load as on muddy roads, and the farmer can move his crops in accordance with the market rather than the condition of the roads, thus reducing storage costs and discouraging speculation.



Good roads lower living costs by keeping the producer on the farm and widening the area of productive cultivation.

Since the beginning of the World War vacation travel has been diverted to tours in our own country resulting in a quickening of interest in road improvement. With the increase in automobiles and extension of national highways tourist travel has increased rapidly, expending money at home rather than abroad and promoting national unity and intelligent patriotism.

Ever since the Romans linked their empire together with good roads that endure to the present day military leaders have recognized the importance of good roads. Motor busses on the splendid highways of France brought up the reserves in time to save the Allies at Verdun. When the railroads of our country were burdened with wartime traffic, and embargoes were placed on non-essentials, the motor truck was extensively used to relieve the freight congestion. Money invested in good roads pays as high dividends in peace as in war. Truly this is a form of "preparedness" which all can endorse!

Winner and Winning Essay in National Good Roads Essay  
Contest for 1922

“How Good Roads are Developing My Community”

By Karl G. Pearson  
Lindsborg, Kansas



Mr. Karl G. Pearson, awarded the Harvey S. Firestone University Scholarship for 1922, at the age of seventeen while attending the Eastern High School at Washington, D. C. His essay on the subject “How Good Roads are Developing My Community” was adjudged the best of more than 250,000 submitted. He is now attending George Washington University at Washington, D. C.

FIVE years ago the little flag station of Buckton lay unnoticed at a point on the railroad where the Blue Valley makes a wide sweep westward.

A freight car, carelessly planted by the track, served as the railroad station. All business of the place was transacted in a little frame building entered by three wooden steps and a stoop out of plumb with the rest of the structure. This was Buckton's post office, grocery store, drug store, and clothing store, all in one. Here the farm hands got their chewing tobacco, and here folks of leisure came to talk a while, after they had been down to see the train pass by. As a steepbanked creek made it difficult for the upland farmers to reach Buckton, they traded mostly at a point five miles farther north. The roads from the other direction were passable only at uncertain periods, for after every shower the clay softened into sticky mud, which made the farmers prefer the fifteen miles

to Summerville, rather than to slump through four miles of mud to Buckton.

However, the same kind of mud produced excellent corn and plump wheat, hence good money when the produce got to market. But it produced also rank weeds along fences and bridges, and often in the tilled fields. In other respects, too, things were allowed to take their own course around Buckton. Bill Tilford, seized by an improvement impulse, remarked, “They're havin' a ‘spruce-up’ week in Summerville; guess a spruce-up week here wouldn't hurt us none.” “What's the use?” retorted Steve Blue. “Nobody travels these roads for sightseeing.”

But Senator Sheffield had good ideas as well as the less usual ability of putting them into practice. A ranch owner of the uplands led with a good roads subscription of \$5,000; farmers' clubs subscribed \$5,000; and the total amount was completed by a levy on farm lands in proportion to their nearness to the

projected new road. And so construction began on a hard surface road to tap both the uplands and the valley. Senator Sheffield insisted on "no cheap work or skimping in this enterprise." The road was built with rock and concrete capable of sustaining the heaviest truck loads. The railroad company foreseeing local progress, removed the ramshackled freight car, and put in its place a suitable depot. An up-to-date garage and a filling station seemed to spring up over night. With the prospect of a good road to their railway station, the farmers built an elevator to save hauling the season's yield the ten or fifteen miles to Summerville.

At the school meeting in August, Buckton was chosen as the site of the consolidated school for six adjoining districts. "This is the place," so went the argument for the proposal, "for the youngsters can get here, and not muss up the rooms with muddy feet; and if they've got too far to walk, we are now in a position to run a bus line for them."

To the general question, "How is Buckton?" Steve Blue now answers, "Oh, things are movin', and if you don't believe it, just look down the road."

People living miles away make the detour to reach Buckton, for it has become a live trading point, and they enjoy the feel of riding along the smooth surface of its thoroughfare. Summerville picnic parties have discovered delightful camping grounds along the road where it sweeps around the bend outside of town. Jim Sharp is setting a new pace for his neighbors by cutting his weeds, and trimming his hedges, and painting his houses and barns. "So many people are coming by that these improvements," he claims, "are called for by common decency."

The new real estate office in Buckton has statistics on economic gains in so far as these are reflected in the sale of farm lands and town lots. But the chief gains, the social and spiritual ones, cannot readily be expressed in statistics.



# ANNOUNCEMENT

## Of the National Good Roads Essay Contest

for the

### Harvey S. Firestone University Scholarship for 1924

*Subject:*

“The Influence of Improved Highways Upon Home Life”

THE Highway Education Board of Washington, D. C., announces fifth annual renewal of the National Good Roads Essay Contest. To student of High School grade writing and submitting the best essay upon subject, “The Influence of Highways upon Home Life,” will be awarded Harvey S. Firestone University Scholarship providing all tuition and expense for a four-year course in any college or university in the country.

The building of roads has become one of America's biggest public projects, close to one billion dollars being appropriated annually for this work. It is so important that the future citizens of America should become familiar with the problems involved and the various benefits to be derived from the proper use of improved highways.

In the four previous contests upwards of one million students have entered the competition and prepared essays. School and university authorities everywhere are assisting and co-operating in the work of the contest.

The rules governing the contest provide that the essays shall not exceed 750 words in length; they must be submitted on or before May 1, 1924; only one side of the paper only should be used; each manuscript must bear the name of the school, grade and home address of the writer; essays should be submitted to the principal or superintendent of the school with the request that it be entered in the National Good Roads Essay Contest; contestants are placed on their honor to submit only manuscripts which they originated and prepared personally; there are no restrictions in the manner in which information upon the subject may be obtained; in fact, discussion of the topic with teachers, parents,

#### CORRECTION.

The proper subject of the essays to be written for the 1924 contest is “Relation of Improved Highways to Home Life.”

April 21, 1924, not May 1, as herein stated, is the closing date of the contest. Essays should not exceed 700 words in length.

Washington, D. C.,  
year.











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